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BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

Engraved by W. Greatbatch

CAPT.ⁿ SIR WILLIAM HOSTE, K.C.B.

R.N. K.C.B. K.M.T.

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MEMOIRS

AND LETTERS

OF

CAPT. SIR WILLIAM HOSTE,

BART., R.N., K.C.B., K.M.T.

"If ever
The powers above did mask in human shapes
To teach mortality; not by cold precepts,
Forgot as soon as told, but by examples
To imitate their pureness and draw near
To their celestial virtues — I believe
He's more than man."

22.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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1833.

444.

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

It is for you, my beloved Children, that I have compiled these pages. I am sensible that though my whole life were devoted to your instruction, I could never teach you to attain that elevation of mind which you ought to possess, unless I placed before you the conduct and feelings of your Father, throughout his eventful career. Let these be your guide! He was snatched away in the days of your infancy, but he has left to you the rich treasure of a spotless name and glorious reputation, for his life was blameless, and his actions not obscure!

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MEMOIRS

AND LETTERS

OF

CAPT. SIR WILLIAM HOSTE,

R.N., K.C.B., K.M.T.

BOOK I.

FROM 1780 TO 1803.

"Silvio, go on; and raise thy noble mind
To noble ends; fling coarse, base thoughts behind:
Silvio, thou son of everlasting fame,
Now aim at virtue and a noble name.
Silvio, consider, honour is not won,
Nor virtue reach'd, till some brave thing be done;
Thy country calls thee now: she burns, she bleeds;
Now raise thyself, young man, to noble deeds,
Into the battle, Silvio, there seek forth
Danger and blood; by them stands sacred worth."

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

MEMOIRS

AND LETTERS

OF

SIR WILLIAM HOSTE.

BOOK I.

FROM 1780 TO 1803.

HOSTE'S BIRTH.—ENTERS THE SERVICE ON BOARD THE AGAMEMNON UNDER NELSON.—SAILS.—CORRESPONDENCE ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS.—SIEGES OF BASTIA AND CALVI.—ADMIRAL HOTHAM'S ACTION OFF GENOA.—BOAT SERVICE.—EXPEDITION AGAINST TENERIFFE.—BATTLE OF THE NILE.—APPOINTED TO THE COMMAND OF THE MUTINE BRIG.—LEFT BY COMMODORE TROWBRIDGE TO SUPERINTEND THE EMBARKATION OF THE FRENCH GARRISON FROM CIVITA VECCHIA.—ACTIVE SERVICE OFF THE COAST OF ITALY.—MADE POST CAPTAIN, AND APPOINTED TO THE GREYHOUND FRIGATE.—RETURNS TO ENGLAND, AFTER AN ABSENCE OF TEN YEARS.

THE eminent services of the officer whose life forms the subject of the following pages, are well known to those who have shared in the labour, or dwelt with attention on the glory of their countrymen; and they will be valued by all (it is confidently hoped) as long as zeal, judgment,

and enterprize can be appreciated. History will record them in golden lines, and, pointing to the hero himself, she will offer him as a noble example, by which others may fashion their conduct in public and private life. A detailed account of his public services, and the many circumstances which marked his private worth, will ever be valuable alike to the practised, and to the youthful seaman, and interesting to those (and many, very many there are) whose hearts still bleed for his premature absence from this world.

William Hoste, the second son of the Rev. Dixon Hoste, rector of Godwick and Sittershall, and Margaret, the daughter of Henry Stanforth, Esq. was born on the 26th day of August, 1780, at Ingoldisthorpe, in the county of Norfolk.*

At seven years old he went to a school at King's Lynn; from thence he was removed and

* He was descended from Jacques Hoost, governor of Bruges, in Flanders, whose son, Jacques Hoste, of Middleburg, in Zealand, was driven from thence on the persecution of the Duke of Alva against the Protestants, and fled to England in 1569. His son, Dierick, married Jane, daughter and heiress of James Desmastus, a rich merchant of London, by whom he had Theodore, father of James Hoste, by Barbara, daughter of Dierick Henricks, who fled into England during the reign of Queen Elizabeth, driven from Holland by

placed under Mr. Hepworth, at North Walsham, where he remained until sent to sea, at the commencement of the war between Great Britain and France, in 1793.

During the earliest years of childhood, there seems to have been little or no insight into his future character, no peculiar discernment of those talents which afterwards so conspicuously shewed themselves on every occasion. But while a restless activity and ever buoyant spirit defied a slender frame and delicate constitution, his tenderness of heart, his warm and generous affections, endeared him to all by whom he was known.

the persecution raised against the Protestants. There is at Middleburg a curious picture of a young lady of the family of Hoste burned at that time for her adherence to the Protestant religion. This James Hoste married Elizabeth, daughter of Edward Key, Alderman of London: he died 1699, leaving a son, James, who married, first, Elizabeth, the youngest daughter of the first Sir Edward Walpole, Knight of the Bath, of Houghton, by whom he had no issue; secondly, Anne, daughter of —— Burleigh, by whom he had issue James, Theodore, Anne, and William. James married Susan, daughter of Anthony Hammond, of Swaffham, in the county of Norfolk, and died, leaving one daughter and heiress, Susan, who married Henry Cornish Henley, whose son is now living, and lord of the manor of ———. Theodore married Mary Hilmore, of Clench Wharton, near Lynn, in Norfolk, by whom he had three sons, viz. Theodore, who died young, the above-mentioned Dixon, and William.

The naval profession was not selected in consequence of any predilection or spontaneous feeling on his part. It was decided by parental authority. And although the event fully justified the choice, a strong sense of duty, united to his superior abilities, would doubtless have led him to the highest distinction in any active profession. For,

> "His mind, while tender in its opening prime,
> Was bent to strenuous virtue."

Happy would it be for all of us if the views of parents were invariably as conducive to the welfare of their children. Happy, if every one, when unconsulted on his future calling, could assimilate so intuitively his inclination to his destiny, and gradually shine forth with greater splendour than even the wishes and affection of his most sanguine friends could ever anticipate.

It was first intended that he should begin his naval career in a vessel about to make a voyage round the world. But on the appointment of Lord Nelson, then Captain Nelson, to the Agamemnon, in 1793, Mr. Coke, of Holkham, (the early and intimate friend of the Rev. Dixon Hoste,) used his influence that he might

be sent under the care of one who, he justly foresaw, must stand, when opportunity offered, amongst the most distinguished officers in the British navy. Captain Nelson, at his request, took young Hoste under his especial protection, and faithful to his charge, he forwarded to his utmost, to the last hour of his eventful life, the views of his early and well-chosen *protégé*.

With the kindness of heart and quick discrimination which, united to higher qualities, were distinguishing characteristics in the life of that immortal hero, it would not have been possible that the docile and generous disposition of Hoste should pass unobserved; and the frequent mention of him in the letters of Lord Nelson, from his earliest acquaintance, prove not only the affection that was felt for him, but also the high promises he had formed in his own mind of his future greatness. How well he justified the opinion thus early formed at the commencement of his public career, the sequel will fully prove.

At the beginning of April 1793, William Hoste, (accompanied by his father, with his elder and beloved brother Dixon,) left Godwick Hall, the scene of his childhood, and pro-

ceeded to London. From thence, in the course of a few weeks, he went to Portsmouth, where he was placed under the care of Nelson himself, then just arrived at Spithead.

The subsequent services of the Agamemnon, and the distinguished activity of her captain by sea and land, are too well known, through his own able biographers, to require to be enlarged upon in this work. The following letters however, from young Hoste, may serve to illustrate those events which every Englishman recurs to again and again with pleasure, and pride, and gratitude, and joy. Nor are they less worthy of insertion on their own account, for they eminently display—what we are always so desirous to find—the sweetest disposition united with the most active zeal; the gentlest heart seconding the efforts of the strongest mind; and, more than all, the patriot's uncompromising virtue grafted on the meek and humble Christian. Here also will be seen with what ardent zeal the young writer embraced his profession, and how earnest he was upon every subject which could tend to its glory and advance its prosperity. And here will be found that early talent for epistolary writing

which was afterwards so highly approved and deservedly admired in his public correspondence.

A few days after joining the ship, he thus addressed his father.

Portsmouth, May 4th, 1793.

MY DEAR FATHER,

We did not sail from Spithead till the 1st of May; the wind not proving fair before. We had a very pleasant cruise, but it would have been more so if we had taken two Dutch frigates and two men-of-war brigs, which we found riding at Cape la Hogue. In all probability we should have captured them if we could have got a pilot to take us in. They ran their ships in amongst some rocks. Night coming on, we left them; no doubt rejoicing in their narrow escape. From thence we proceeded to Cherbourg; we went so near it that we could perceive, with glasses, the people walking on the shore. It is remarkably well fortified; the officers on board all considered it to be one of the strongest places they ever saw. The country around it looked in very high cultivation.

All attempts at getting anything here being

fruitless, we sailed along the coast till we came to the island of Alderney, where we made a signal for a pilot. A boat accordingly came off with two, but both being ignorant of the pilotage of the aforesaid cape, we were obliged to desist from any further attack upon those dastardly Frenchmen among the rocks. Our time being fixed for returning this morning, we were obliged to steer for Old England without a prize, and are at this moment entering Spithead. So much for our cruise.

Now for a little about myself. I like my situation very much. Captain Nelson treats me as he said he would; and as a proof, I have lived with him ever since I have been on board. I hope my mother and all the family are well; and with best love to all, remain,

Your affectionate son, WILLIAM HOSTE.

TO THE SAME.

May 11th, 1793.

MY DEAR FATHER,

We sailed to St. Helens yesterday evening, and shall leave it to-morrow for Gibraltar. This is probably the last opportunity I shall

have of writing for some time. Four sail of the line will accompany us under the command of Admiral Hotham. Lord Hood, in the Victory, will follow us in about ten days. I was on shore with the two Mr. Weatherheads last Thursday, and saw some of the treasure landed. Yesterday morning it set off for town attended by a regiment of horse and a band of music.

With best love to all. Believe, &c. &c.

TO MRS. HOSTE.

May 19th, 1793.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

We have been cruising in the Channel ever since I wrote last, and it is the general opinion that Admiral Hotham intends to remain here till Lord Hood comes out. We have boarded several vessels, but I believe the French fight shy, as none of them have proved to be of that nation. Hitherto we have had fine weather and pleasant sailing, though scarcely wind enough to give a sickening motion to our vessel, and we are now within a few leagues of Plymouth. We are a little out of humour, that out of all the vessels we have chased, we have not met with one

enemy, not a single prize. The Colossus and Lowestoffe are now in chase, but our hopes have been so often frustrated, that a sail in sight is scarcely a subject of concern to us, unless the admiral were to make the signal for us to chase. I hope my father is well, and that the May foxes have given him good sport.

TO MISS HOSTE.

Agamemnon, Cadiz, June 15th, 1793.

MY DEAR SISTER,

I am happy in this opportunity of writing to you, though I have scarcely anything to say worth relating. With regard to our naval exploits, we have little indeed to boast of. We are at length arrived at Cadiz, after having cruised about the chops of the Channel a month, in hopes of falling in with a French convoy of St. Domingo merchantmen. Hitherto there has been fine weather, and very delightful sailing, but it gets so hot now, that it is quite unpleasant. Yesterday we left Lord Hood's fleet, and proceeded to Cadiz under the command of Captain Elphinstone. In our way hither, we captured a French man-of-war brig, and a ten-gun pri-

vateer, with a merchantman; also took and sunk two luggers. We have got four Frenchmen prisoners on board. I expect to go on shore either to-day or to-morrow. Our stay here will be for a very short time indeed.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Agamemnon, off Toulon, August 5th, 1793.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I am happy to embrace an opportunity of writing to you which now offers, by the arrival of the Aquilon frigate, with his Royal Highness Prince Augustus Frederick from Leghorn, and it is now despatched by Lord Hood for England. We are cruising off Toulon; no vessel can come in or go out, but what we shall make a prize of. We have taken some prizes, though of no consequence, and there are a few prisoners here on board, one of which is a lieutenant, of whom I may acquire some knowledge of the French language. A short time since we sent into Toulon a flag-of-truce, concerning an exchange of prisoners, but it seems the French patriots were not disposed to be troubled with any more of their gang. We left Cadiz the 23rd of June,

after a stay of about seven days, getting water, &c. and then proceeded to Gibraltar, where we joined the rest of the fleet. At Gibraltar we took in wine for the use of the ship's company, but some unexpected intelligence having been received by his lordship, we left Gibraltar after a stay of only two days. On the morning of the 3rd of July we saw a fleet of thirty sail, which we supposed to be the French fleet. The admiral made the signal to form the line of battle a-head, which was completed in good order; but we soon found ourselves mistaken, as it proved to be the Spanish fleet, which we understood were to join us, but they were in want of water, and their men sick, and therefore obliged to go to Carthagena to refit.

We have been off Toulon three weeks: the French must be in a most distressed state. We hear they have twenty sail of the line in Toulon, one of them a very large ship, called the Sans Culotte, of 130 guns, and 1600 men. Notwithstanding, they will not give us an opportunity of beating them, as they dare not trust any person with the command. Some days since, the Illustrious, 74, Captain Frederick, engaged two

French frigates; the master and three of the sailors were killed in the action, but the frigates escaped. The action happened in the night, and within our hearing.

I like the sea very much indeed. Captain Nelson is exceedingly kind to me. We have a schoolmaster on board, who is a very clever man. I hope that you, my mother, and all are quite well at Godwick. I remain, &c. &c.

Lord Hood's unsuccessful negotiations with the deputies of the Sections of Toulon, for placing the citadel and forts on the coast provisionally at his disposal, were rapidly drawing to a close, when the Agamemnon was unexpectedly ordered to proceed off Onylia, to forward despatches to the court of Turin, and from thence to Naples. Returning to join the admiral, she put into Leghorn.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Agamemnon, Leghorn, Sept. 29th, 1793.

DEAR FATHER,

We arrived at this place last Tuesday from Naples, where we should have remained

much longer, but some intelligence we received, occasioned us to leave it sooner than we first intended. Our stay there was only four days; in so short a time, half the curiosities of the place we could not see. Mount Vesuvius, about six miles from Naples, we have beheld in all its glory, for now its irruptions are most splendid; the lava spreading from the top at a great distance, and rolling down the mountain in long streaks of fire. Captain Nelson was so kind as to present me with two orders of admission to the king's museum, and the ruins of Herculaneum, which were well worth seeing; but it was a mortifying circumstance to us, that our conductors could not speak either English or French; therefore our curiosity was more excited than gratified. To attempt any description is not in my power.

The city of Naples is large, but the houses are very irregular; they have some fine buildings, the king's palace and public offices. The King of Naples intended to honour us with a visit on board; the day was fixed, and we were all prepared for his reception, but some unexpected business prevented his coming, which

was a disappointment to us all. Sir William Hamilton, our ambassador, came on board with Lady Hamilton, to whom the captain introduced me, and with them the Bishop of Winchester.

TO THE SAME.

DEAR FATHER,

Though I have written so lately, yet a circumstance has happened since, which induces me to take this opportunity of writing to you again. On Sunday afternoon we saw two ships close in shore, which we supposed were French frigates. Accordingly we gave chase. They had, however, the good fortune to get under the protection of a fort before we could cut them off. We stood in after them; but as it was late in the evening, and dark, we could not with safety go into the harbour, though we were almost within gun-shot. The fort fired at us, but their balls fell short; we returned the compliment, and reached them. In the morning, Captain Nelson intended to send in our boats to burn them, but they thought proper to save us the trouble by coming out of the harbour with five or six small vessels, in consequence of

a message Captain Nelson sent them by a neutral vessel, which had its effect. They proved to be all Genoese, and therefore we could not make prizes of them. They informed us the French had one man killed; the country people were running up the mountain, crying out, "Mon Dieu!" very much frightened, thinking we should land. Six hundred of the militia were sent down to oppose our landing. The name of the harbour is Cagliari, about twelve leagues to the east of Toulon. We have taken a prize valued at 15,000*l.* or 16,000*l.* I can say no more, as the boat is going. I remain, &c.

TO THE SAME.

Agamemnon, Nov. 27th, 1793.

MY DEAR FATHER,

Since my last letter from Leghorn, a variety of occurrences have happened which may be worth relating: of which I shall give the best account that lies in my power, and I shall be happy if it contributes in the least to your amusement. On our arrival at Toulon from Leghorn, Captain Nelson had directions to prepare for a cruise to the southward: two days

after, we had sailing orders, ourselves, and also the Nemesis frigate, to join a squadron of ships under the command of Commodore Linzée, off Cagliari, the south end of the isle of Sardinia; and as the purport of our voyage there has some connexion with an engagement we had with a French frigate, I shall give an account of it.

We understood on our joining the commodore Linzée, that our destination was for Tunis,* to take out the Du Quesne, a French 80 gun ship, and four frigates then lying there, waiting to convoy a fleet of merchantmen to Marseilles; for which service the commodore, in the Alcide 74, was appointed by Lord Hood, under whose command were the Berwick and Illustrious, 74 guns each, ourselves, Lowestoffe, and Nemesis frigates.

When we got to Tunis, we found only the Du Quesne and merchantmen: the four frigates were gone, which the Agamemnon had nearly been too sensible of, as those were the very frigates we met in our voyage to Cagliari, which, had

* The Dey of Tunis seemed wavering at that time in his principles, and continued to take part with the French Convention, or which account Lord Hood despatched a small squadron under Commodore Linzée to proceed to Tunis with offers of friendship to the Dey, and the most effectual support of his Majesty's fleet.

they acted as they ought to have done, could have prevented our joining the commodore. On our arrival at Tunis, we expected the Bey would have given us leave to take out the Du Quesne and merchantmen, but we found he would not allow the neutrality of the Porte to be broken, however superior we were in those seas; nor would the Du Quesne give herself up to the French king, notwithstanding all our negotiations to that purpose. In consequence the commodore despatched the Nemesis to Toulon for farther orders. On her arrival from thence, we found we were not to attempt any thing. She has brought orders for Captain Nelson to take under his command the Lowestoffe on a cruise, but where to, or on what service, remains a secret.

In the first part of my letter, I told you we left Toulon in company with the Nemesis. Sailing along the island of Corsica, we picked up a prize, which we sent into Leghorn. The day after, we lost sight of the Nemesis. On the 22nd of October, running down the isle of Sardinia, we saw five sail of ships, about two o'clock in the morning, standing to the north-west, when

on seeing us they tacked and stood to the east. Captain Nelson, suspecting them to be a French convoy, immediately stood after them.

About four o'clock, we got within gun-shot of the hindermost, and hailed her in French. On her returning no answer, we fired a gun a-head for her to bring to, and shorten sail. We observed her making signals with sky-rockets to her consorts, who were some distance to windward. After we had repeatedly hailed to no purpose, we fired one of our eighteen-pounders at her, to oblige her to shorten sail; at the same time opened our lower-deck ports, which frightened her, as she immediately made more sail to get away; by that it appears she took us for a frigate. It was daylight before we got up with her again, as she had the start of us.

About five A.M. we were within half gun-shot, and found her to be a fine forty-gun frigate. She hoisted national colours, and favoured us with a broadside. We returned the compliment, though our situation was rather unfavourable, as our shot did not at all times hit her, while the frigate, owing to her superiority of sailing, kept her position, and pointed her guns to advantage,

firing in an angular direction, which did more execution. She bravely engaged us in this way for three hours, both sailing at the rate of six knots an hour, till by our constant firing it fell calm. The other frigates were coming after us with a fresh breeze, consequently we expected to have some warm work, therefore were anxious to despatch this gentleman before the others came up.

About eight o'clock, by a change in the wind, the frigate got out of the reach of our guns. Our last broadside did her infinite damage, nor was our's inconsiderable, as our rigging was shot away, and our main-top-mast sprung, which prevented us from going after her. We had one man killed and two wounded.

By this time the other ships were within a league of us, (the nearest one appeared of the same force as ourselves,) and were coming down with all sail set; we expected nothing less than that they would engage us, and were prepared for their reception, but their courage failed them, as we had given their friends so complete a drubbing. She made signals of distress; all of them went to her assistance, and hoisted their

boats out; we pursued our journey to Cagliari, being satisfied with offering them battle. Had the breeze continued, we should have preserved our distance from the other frigates, and our antagonist must have either struck or sunk: though if she had struck, we could not have taken possession of her in sight of a force so superior. The Agamemnon had only three hundred and fifty men at quarters, consequently she was no better than a 50-gun ship. I have since heard, that Lord Hood has directed some frigates to join the Agamemnon off the north end of Corsica, under the command of Captain Nelson, as commodore. We have received intelligence of the French frigates being in the bay of Fiorenza. To take those frigates, is, I understand, the intention of this cruise. Lord Hood has given Captain Nelson the greatest proofs of his being satisfied with his conduct, by giving him the command of this expedition. He is acknowledged to be one of the first captains in the service, and is universally beloved by his men and officers. I should be greatly wanting in gratitude, were I not to pay this tribute to his merit, and kindness to me. Yours, &c.

The Agamemnon was employed at the end of the year in blockading the forts on the coast of Corsica. No opportunity of distinction was thrown away on our young hero. He was already to be found in that position which he always maintained, the first rank of honour. In the cruise and blockade, he engaged the attention of Nelson, who with that sagacity which almost amounts to the power of prediction, declared in a letter to his wife, that Hoste would shine in our service; and on the same day he wrote to his father the following testimonial of the early merit of his son.

Agamemnon, Leghorn, Feb. 14th, 1794.

DEAR SIR,

You cannot receive much more pleasure in reading this letter, than I have in writing it, to say that your son is every thing which his dearest friends can wish him to be, and is a strong proof that the greatest gallantry may lie under the most gentle behaviour. Two days ago, it was necessary to take a small vessel from a number of people who had got on shore to prevent us; she was carried in high style, and

your good son was by my side; we had six men badly wounded.

I am, dear sir, your most obedient servant,

HORATIO NELSON.

FROM THE SAME.

Camp, Bastia, May 3rd, 1794.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your letter of March 10th, I received only yesterday; it ought to have arrived near three weeks ago. Your good son had long ago received your letter relative to the melancholy event in your family, as I brought it from the Victory for him, and I am sure he has repeatedly written, because he has told me so; and I have not failed to remind him of the pleasure his letters must give you. The little brushes we have had since I wrote to you, only serve to convince me of the great truth of what I wrote to you. In his navigation, you will find him equally forward; he highly deserves everything I can do to make him happy. Do not spoil him by giving him too much money; he has all that he wishes—sometimes more. I love him, therefore shall say no more on that subject. You will have heard that

we are before Bastia. This island, the finest almost in the world, I hope will belong to England; the inhabitants are strongly attached to us, and it will give us the command of the Mediterranean. The Italian States, and the Spaniards, I believe, are jealous of our taking it, well knowing its consequence. The Agamemnon is moored off our camp. Your dear boy wishes much to come on shore with me, and if I had not thought the danger was too great, I should have brought him; however, he has been several times to see me. The zeal of our soldiers and seamen is, I believe, almost unexampled.

I am, dear Sir, your very humble servant,

HORATIO NELSON.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Agamemnon, May 7th, 1794.

MY DEAR FATHER,

On the 3rd instant I had the pleasure of hearing from you and my mother; nothing could be more welcome to me, nor the contents more pleasing, than to find my endeavours to deserve your regard have been successful. It shall always be my constant study to make you happy by my

good conduct; indeed, I cannot do otherwise, as Captain Nelson gives me every encouragement. Before you can receive this, I hope Bastia will be ours, as we understand they have but a few days' provisions, and little ammunition. This place is not particularly strong by art, but they have a number of commanding situations, which, if only tolerably fortified, will defend the town against four times the number of troops we have, and the smallness of our force will not allow us to storm.

Our batteries seem to have made little impression; they have been opened ever since the 9th of April, and have thrown between seven and eight hundred shells. The town is chiefly built of stone, which prevents its taking fire so soon, but many of the houses are in ruins, and a number of the inhabitants have lost their lives since the commencement of the siege; however I do not hear we are the nearer taking it, only by their being fairly starved out. They will listen to no terms whatever, even reduced as we know they are. Two days ago, they sent a message to Lord Hood, saying, they would give him four days to get all his troops embarked; if after that any

remained, they would be put to death. Such is their desperate resolution, that we hourly expect they will make a sortie, their last effort. Our killed and wounded at present do not amount to more than ten or twelve. Captain Clarke, of the 69th, has lost his right arm, who is the only person of any note. Colonel Velet, &c. commands the land forces; Captain Hunt the seamen and working parties; Captain Nelson acts on shore for Lord Hood, every thing goes by his direction. We expect a strong reinforcement from Gibraltar, but hope the place will surrender before their arrival. A sad accident happened to his Majesty's ship Ardent, which was blown up, and all on board perished.

The French fleet is expected out of Toulon; we have a superior fleet cruising off there, under the command of Admiral Hotham. There is some talk of the Agamemnon going home when this place is taken, but I am afraid the news is too good to be true. Mr. Weatherhead is on shore with Captain Nelson; he is employed in the batteries, with a party of seamen from the Agamemnon, under the particular directions of the captain. I should be much obliged to you

to inform his father that he is quite well, for he has not time to write, therefore has told me to say as much. To Weatherhead I am greatly indebted for every friendly office; I assure you, he has never forgot the charge he took of me upon your leaving us.

I remain, dear father, your affectionate son,

WILLIAM HOSTE.

TO THE SAME.

Off Minorca, Agamemnon, June 7th, 1794.

MY DEAR FATHER,

Soon after I wrote last, we went to Leghorn with Admiral Hotham and the fleet, to get water and other provisions. We lay there some time, Admiral Hotham having received intelligence that the French fleet were in so disabled a state, that they could not come out for some time.

I am sorry to say the French have received a reinforcement of six sail of the line and two frigates; but through gales of wind, and other accidents, they arrived in a very shattered condition at Toulon, and will not be able to act against us for some time. While we were at

Leghorn, Admiral Hotham hoisted his flag at the main, and we hear he is to have the command of the Mediterranean fleet, Lord Hood having resigned.

We left Leghorn the 7th of last month, and the admiral shaped his course for Minorca; but through foul winds we did not arrive off here till the latter end of May. We have been cruising off here ever since, waiting the reinforcement of ships from England, but it seems they have forgotten there is a fleet in the Mediterranean; for if the French were able to come to sea, which they will be in a very short time, they may take Corsica, and drive us out of the Mediterranean; for the Spaniards are of no use to us; although they have got above twenty sail of the line up here, but in a very bad state indeed. Lately they have gained a complete victory over the French by land, near the Bay of Rosas, and encompassed the French army, so that nothing but the French fleet can relieve them. Admiral Hotham has written to Don Languen, the Spanish admiral, saying if he will lend him five sail of the line, he will go and cruise off the Bay of Rosas, and prevent the French from coming to the

relief of their countrymen. He has received for answer, that he must first receive directions from the Court of Madrid; but I hope before that time the ships from England will join us, and then the Spaniards may lie in their harbours as long as they please, before we will disturb them: they are a set of dirty, cowardly rascals, and I don't care how soon we are at war with them. A sans culotte is a prince compared with the best of them.

Admiral Hotham sent the other day a squadron of frigates off Toulon upon a cruise. They returned yesterday, and brought an account that the French have got twenty-one sail of men-of-war lying in Toulon, but only four ready for sea; the others will be ready for sea in a short time. We hear from a gun-boat the frigates took during the cruise, that the French are determined to come out to try their luck with us again. I hope, when our ships join us, they will not alter their opinion, for I think they will get a worse thrashing than the last. If they do come out, our fleet are determined to take the Berwick if possible. The captain who now commands her was one of the members who voted that all English

prisoners who were or might be taken, should be put to death; and we have certain accounts that when he commanded the Badine French frigate, he captured an English merchantman, and caused all the crew to be shot on board of the Badine. Nothing would give me more pleasure than to see such a wretch as that hanging at the foreyard-arm. I must conclude with love to all at Godwick.

Your dutiful son, W. Hoste.

TO THE SAME.

Agamemnon, July 4th, 1794.

MY DEAR FATHER,

In my last I informed you there was a report that the Agamemnon was going home. I can now say so for certain, and hope soon to have the pleasure of seeing you, my mother, and all the family; for directly Calvi is taken we are to proceed to England with a convoy. After the capture of Bastia, we lay there for some time, taking in shot and shells for Calvi. A day or two before we sailed, news was brought to Lord Hood, that the French squadron had sailed from Toulon to relieve Calvi. Upon hearing this,

Lord Hood, with the Princess Royal, Illustrious, Fortitude, and Agamemnon, got under weigh, and went in search of them: the day after we fell in with Admiral Hotham, and eight sail of the line. Lord Hood then sent us to Bastia, to convoy the transports over to Fiorenzo, and then to Calvi, whilst he continued the chase after the French fleet, which is now blocked up by Admiral Hotham and nine sail of the line, in Margarite Bay, near Toulon.

The French squadron consists of eight sail of the line and frigates, ours of ten sail of the line and three frigates. We hear that Lord Hood intends sending three fire-ships to burn the French fleet. I wish them success with all my heart, but think it a dangerous expedition.

We arrived at Calvi the 21st of June, and landed the troops and one hundred seamen from the Agamemnon, who are now employed making the batteries, which will open either to-morrow or the next day. Our advanced battery is within four hundred yards of the French redoubt. Captain Nelson is on shore, and has the same command as at Bastia. Three deserters came into the camp yesterday, and informed us the

French had only fifteen days' provisions, and could not hold out long. An engagement took place here the other day between the French and Corsicans. The French attacked a Corsican outpost, drove the Corsicans from it, killed their commandant, and wounded three of their men. We immediately sent a party of two hundred men, with two field-pieces, under the command of Major Brereton, who soon put them to the rout. Calvi is very strong by nature: it is situated on a large rock, has good fortifications, but thinly garrisoned: its principal fort is Harfort. We heard here yesterday that Lord Howe has engaged the French fleet in the Channel, and taken seven sail of the line, sunk one, and dismasted three. Lord Hood fired a *feu-de-joie* on the occasion. I hope you will soon hear that the French squadron in the Mediterranean is destroyed by some means or another.

TO THE SAME.

Leghorn, Agamemnon, Aug. 24, 1794.

MY DEAR FATHER,

In my last I informed you we were besieging Calvi, which surrendered to us the 10th

instant, after a siege of fifty-five days: the garrison were allowed the same terms as at Bastia. The town was very much shattered. If we had continued firing at the rate we had for thirty-six hours, from thirty pieces of different kinds of ordnance, not one house would have had a stone standing. Finding our shells too warm for them, they thought proper to send out a flag of truce, which prevented more blood from being shed. Our loss during the siege was trifling, compared with that of the enemy, who must have suffered greatly by the many shells which were thrown into the town, and as we may judge by the blood which was seen in every part of their works. We took possession of the town, which was well fortified with fifty brass guns, mortars, &c.

We found here our old antagonist, the Melpomene, with another frigate, which the sailors took possession of immediately. The captain of the Melpomene has the impudence to boast of beating off the Agamemnon, and was very angry with the governor of Calvi for giving up the town. It was lucky for us the siege continued no longer, as the men were getting sick every

day by the badness of the water. So many were ill on board the Agamemnon, that we were forced to proceed to Leghorn, where we now are, and shall remain for some time. What next may be our destination, is quite uncertain. The French squadron is still blocked up by Admiral Goodall, in Margarite Bay. The French say they will soon retake Corsica; but I think, while we have a superior fleet in the Mediterranean, they may try in vain. I am sorry to hear of the ill success the Duke of York has had on the Continent.

TO THE SAME.

Agamemnon, Leghorn, Oct. 21st, 1794.

After remaining at Leghorn some time, we proceeded to Genoa, in full expectation of going afterwards to England; but I am afraid I shall not see old Godwick so soon as I expected, as the French have a superior force in the Mediterranean, so that we cannot be spared; but we shall be the first ship to go to England, as we are so sickly. The French naval force in the Mediterranean amounts to sixteen sail of the line, besides frigates, seven of which are blocked

up in Margarite Bay; the rest are in Toulon. If they should come out, which is very much expected, there will be hot work on both sides, and it will finally determine the superiority in the Mediterranean.

We left Genoa the latter end of September, and have been cruising with the fleet ever since, until we were forced to go to Leghorn for water and provisions. Shortly we expect to sail for the fleet, when we shall cruise some time under the command of Admiral Hotham, who is now commander-in-chief up the Mediterranean, Lord Hood having sailed for England for the recovery of his health.

We were lately in great expectation of having a cruise up the Archipelago by ourselves, as Admiral Hotham had said we should; but the French fleet being expected out so soon, it is given over for the present. If we should go, I expect to make my fortune, as there are a great number of French vessels up there.

Captain N. is very well, and in as high spirits as ever.

TO THE SAME.

Agamemnon, March 20th, 1795.

MY DEAR FATHER,

What we have so long expected and wished for, has happened at last. We have engaged the French fleet, and beat them: the particulars of the action I will relate to you as far as lies in my power. We were lying in Leghorn Roads, the 9th instant, when one of our look-out frigates made the signal for a strange sail in the offing. Admiral Hotham immediately made the signal for the fleet to weigh, but it falling a little wind, we did not get out till the next morning: we then stood for Corsica; but not finding them there, the admiral altered his course, and stood to the northward.

On the 11th, our look-out frigates discovered the enemy's fleet standing to the eastward. On the 12th, early in the morning, the Agamemnon, with the Princess Royal, Admiral Goodall, found ourselves as near the French fleet as our own, Admiral Hotham having altered his course during the night. They might have cut us off with the greatest ease if they pleased, but

a breeze of wind luckily sprang up and enabled us to join our own fleet. We expected to engage them that night, but unfortunately, it being calm, we could not come up with them. Early in the morning of the 13th, a fine breeze springing up, the signal was made for a general chase. The French fleet were then standing to windward, carrying a press of sail. We had not chased long when one of the French ships carried away her topmasts, and fell to leeward. The Agamemnon being one of the fast sailers, soon came up with her, and engaged her for three hours. We were obliged to leave her, or the whole French fleet would have tacked and bore down upon us, in a line of battle abreast, to save their disabled ship. The admiral, seeing us in danger, made our signal to join our fleet; the French being then within random shot, and firing at us. We joined our fleet, and the French fleet hauled their wind on the larboard tack, formed in a line of battle a-head standing from us, having their disabled ship in tow. The ship we engaged was the Ça Ira, of 84 guns and 1300 men; she had one hundred and ten men killed and wounded in the action with

us, and she was otherwise much disabled in her masts and rigging. We very luckily had not a man hurt. I assure you, the Agamemnon was the sole cause of the French fleet being brought to action the day following, as we disabled the Ça Ira so much on the 13th, that she could not get top-masts up in the night. We were at quarters all that night, hoping to have another brush with them in the morning.

At daylight, the wind shifting gave us the weather gauge. Admiral Hotham immediately made the signal to form the line a-head, and prepare for action. The English fleet consisted of fourteen sail of the line. At forty minutes past six, part of our van was engaged with the enemy, and about half-past nine the whole fleet was in action. We continued engaging them for five or six hours, and the day ended with the taking of the Ça Ira; and Le Censeur of 74 guns and 1000 men. The Agamemnon had not a man killed, two slightly wounded. The number of men killed on board the two French ships I have not been able to hear exactly, but I believe about eight hundred killed and wounded.

I remain, &c. W. Hoste.

Agamemnon, off Minorca, June 21st, 1795.

MY DEAR FATHER,

We have been cruising off Minorca ever since the beginning of this month. Admiral Mann's squadron joined us the 14th inst. with six sail of the line and two frigates. He left two of the line at Gibraltar, to bring the convoy up. We expect to see them every hour. The Juno this morning joined the fleet from Leghorn. She brings an account that the French fleet were out, consisting of twenty-two sail of the line, &c. She saw nothing of them on her passage; it is supposed they are gone off Barcelona to cruise for our convoy. We expect every minute to bear up for that place. They have been out once before, but did not stay long, on account of some disagreement between themselves. I hope we shall catch them before they get into Toulon; if we do, there will be some broken heads, but I think Monsieur will come off second best. Our fleet now consists of twenty-two sail of the line, besides frigates. It will be very hard if we do not give those Frenchmen a good drubbing now, when we are equal to them. The fleet are in high spirits, and only

wish for an opportunity of thrashing those Frenchmen again.

You say in your letter that Master Dick is a bad hand at shooting; pray tell him I think he would make a better hand at shooting the Frenchmen. I was very sorry to hear Lord Hood had struck his flag: we understand his reason was he had not force enough. It is supposed Admiral Hotham will hoist his flag on board the Victory, and that Captain Knight will have the Britannia. I have no more news to inform you of now. Keep a good look-out on the newspapers, for I think before long you will hear of another action with the French fleet.

Yours, &c.

On the 26th of August, Captain Nelson, while in the command of the squadron off Vado Bay, received information that a convoy of provisions and ammunition was arrived at Alasio, for the supply of the French troops on that coast. He immediately proceeded thither, and sent in the boats of the squadron to bring out the vessels. Young Hoste commanded a small boat on that occasion, and gallantly brought out a vessel of

seventy tons, having on board seventeen hundred stand of arms and also ammunition. In bringing the vessel out of the bay, he met with an unfortunate accident, by falling down the scuttle, and breaking his leg, which, in the following letter, he describes with much spirit to his brother.

TO DIXON HOSTE, ESQ.

Agamemnon, Vado, Sept. 14th, 1795.

MY DEAR DIXON,

I have been waiting impatiently this long time, in hopes of hearing from you or some of the family, but I am sorry to say, I have not had a letter from home these four months: your last, dated in May, I received off Minorca, and answered it the same day. I wrote to you from Leghorn, informing you of the late action with the Frenchmen, and am in daily expectation of an answer to it. We have been cruising off Vado (a bay a little to the westward of Genoa) ever since, and took a rich prize off there, valued at £50,000; I expect to get £40 or £50 for my share, which will keep me a few weeks.

We were lying there the other day, when Captain Nelson received intelligence of some

vessels lying at Alasio, a place a little to the westward of Vado. We immediately weighed anchor, and stood in for Alasio, cleared ship for action, and beat to quarters. About noon we came to with a spring on our cable, and got our broadside to bear against the fort, but the Frenchmen's hearts failed them, for they left their vessels and durst not fire from the fort. They thought we were going to land, as we saw a good many troops drawn up behind the town, and also some cavalry. Seeing they did not fire from the fort, we hoisted out our boats to tow away the vessels.

I shall now inform you what part of the play I acted. I was sent in a boat to get one of the vessels out, which I soon did, and was in hopes I should bring her into Vado Bay, when an unlucky accident happened to me, which I will relate. I expected to get into Vado Bay that night, therefore I ordered the men to get the cable up to bend to the anchor; the cable led up through a small scuttle or hole abaft; they forgot to cover the hole afterwards, so that I, going aft some time after, fell down the scuttle and broke my leg: at that time the Agamemnon, being pretty

near us, the men put me into the boat and rowed me on board, where I got my leg mended, and in a few days shall be as well as ever.

Don't you think I was very unlucky to lose the command of my vessel so soon? However, I comfort myself with singing "Dearest Peg" all weathers, and I assure you I find great relief from it. My leg pains me a little at times, but the pleasure of writing to a brother entirely drives that away.

I assure you, Dick, if I were to go on board of any ship in the British navy, I could not be more happy, nor have more care taken of me, since this accident, than has been taken of me on board the Agamemnon. Directly I was brought on board, I was carried down into Mr. Suckling's cabin, where I have remained ever since. Mr. Suckling has behaved to me like a father; he has been with me all the while, except when his duty called him away.

To add to my misfortunes, my good friend Mr. Weatherhead is away; he was sent in a prize to St. Fiorenzo. I had a letter from him the other day; he was very well, and desired his compliments. As worthy a young man as ever lived.

I got up yesterday for the first time, and I think if you were to see poor Billy shanks* hopping about on crutches, you would die with laughter. Captain Nelson is very well; he often comes down to see me, and tells me to get every thing I want from him.

TO MRS. HOSTE.

Agamemnon, Leghorn, Sept. 24th, 1795.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

I have this instant received your letters of the 12th of August, for which I return you my most hearty thanks, and as we are in Leghorn, I shall take the opportunity of answering them immediately.

You say in your letter, how near we were being taken by the French fleet. We were indeed, and as the account may afford my dear mother some amusement, I will not hesitate a moment in giving it.

After our return from Minorca with the fleet, Captain Nelson was despatched with two frigates to Vado Bay, to intercept ships bound from Genoa to any port in France. A day or two

* This was a nickname he playfully gave himself.

after we sailed from St. Fiorenzo, we fell in with the French fleet. We first were in hopes it was a French convoy, but a few hours after convinced us to the contrary, for the Mutine cutter spoke to us, and told us it was their fleet. They sent out two frigates to reconnoitre, who kept sight of us all night, and the next morning we saw four large ships standing after us. Observing them to be much superior to us, we bore away for St. Fiorenzo, the ships after us with a press of sail.

After ten o'clock that day, the whole of the French fleet hove in sight, consisting of nineteen sail of the line, besides frigates. Just as we got near to St. Fiorenzo, it fell almost calm, and what little wind there was, blew right out of the bay, the Frenchmen coming up fast and nearly within gun-shot. You may guess, our situation was not very comfortable; the first time I thought I should have the pleasure of seeing a French prison. However, we cleared ship for action, and got our stern chases out, determined to fight to the last extremity. About twelve, a breeze luckily springing up, enabled us to reach the bay. The French seeing this, tacked

and stood to the westward; and we saw no more of them till the last action, an account of which I wrote to my father.

We hear that the Spaniards have not yet made peace, and do not intend it, for fear of England declaring war. I wish heartily we were at war with such a set of cowardly rascals, for they are of no use to us here, and nothing would give me more pleasure than to fight any seventy-four they have got. I was sorry to hear of the unhappy fate of the emigrants at Quiberon, they certainly are much to be pitied; we hear there is another party of them landed, and I hope they will be more successful. The French fleet is now lying in Toulon, I believe it will be some time before they trouble us again, I do not care how soon. I can give you no hopes of the Agamemnon going home yet, though we hear there are twelve sail of the line coming up to relieve ships on this station, but I do not believe it. I wish you were all at Vado for one day, and I think I could show you plenty of artillery. It is needless to say, my dearest mother, how happy I was to hear that you and all the family were well. I hope soon to hear from you again.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Agamemnon, Leghorn, December 9th, 1795.

MY DEAR FATHER,

Before this reaches you, most likely you will have heard of Vado being taken by the French again. We were lying at Genoa when we first heard of it, and immediately weighed and stood for Vado. Captain Nelson immediately sent a boat on shore to Savona, a town a few miles to the eastward of Vado, then as we thought in possession of the Genoese, but soon found ourselves mistaken, and that the French had got possession of that place also. They kept the boat, and detained the officer that was sent in her, on suspicion of his being a spy.

Pray let me ask whether you recollect a Mr. Noble, who showed us round the fleet when we were at Portsmouth; he was made a lieutenant a few days ago into the Agamemnon, but he did not enjoy his command long, as he was taken prisoner in the boat we sent on shore at Savona. He is a very good young man, I believe, and behaved very well to me the short time he was on board. We have since heard

that he has been taken to Nice, where I suppose he will remain till the next exchange of prisoners.

We left Vado last week, and arrived at Leghorn the 6th. I can give you no hope of our going to England, till some ships arrive from thence. We hear that Admiral Parker has fell in with the French squadron from Toulon, and retaken the Censeur, one line-of-battle ship, and most of the convoy. I wish it may be true with all my heart.

TO MRS. HOSTE.

Genoa, April 20th, 1796.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

It is approaching fast to five months now since I have had the pleasure of hearing from you, or indeed from any of the family, and if it were not by learning from other people, I should be in doubt whether old Godwick was in being or not. I have written to my father and sister likewise, but have received no answer from either. Your letters must have miscarried, for as to your writing when there is an opportunity, I make not the least doubt. I assure you, it

is a most mortifying circumstance to see every body getting letters, whilst I, poor Pilgarlic, must remain without one; for believe me, nothing can give me more pleasure than hearing that all at Godwick are in perfect health. By a letter which Mr. Weatherhead received the other day, I had the pleasure to hear that you and all the family were well.

We have got the Vado station again this summer, where I dare say we shall have some warm work. The Austrians and French are fighting daily, but neither side have gained any particular advantage yet. The former say they will be in Vado before May. I wish their words may prove true, but the French are so numerous that most of the long heads think it will take a longer time.

According to all accounts, the French army amounts to eighty thousand, the Austrians between fifty and sixty thousand; but the latter make up in courage what they want in numbers, though, to give the French their due, they fight very well.

We are now lying in Genoa, but believe we shall take leave of it to-morrow; indeed it is un-

certain, as we wait for the orders of the Austrian General Beaulieu. The French, a few days back, laid the city of Genoa under contribution, which the Doge and senate (trusting to the assistance of the Austrian army) refused to pay. The French immediately sent a body of six thousand men to the gates of Genoa, and demanded entrance, which was denied them. The Austrian army immediately attacked, and drove them back to Vado, with some loss. We were ordered along the coast to flank them; but it falling calm, we could not act in concert with the Austrians. Our squadron at present consists of two sail of the line and four frigates, but it is to be increased in the summer, when we shall not want for amusement I make no doubt, as our commodore does not like to be idle. I suppose your curiosity is excited by the word Commodore Nelson. It gives me infinite pleasure to be able to relieve it, by informing you that our good captain has had this additional mark of distinction conferred on him, which I dare say you will agree with me that his merit richly deserves. His broad pendant is now flying; therefore I

must beg, my dear father, to draw an additional cork in honour of our gallant countryman.

Our fleet, consisting of fourteen sail of the line, under the command of Sir John Jervis, have been cruising off the French coast this long time, but have been very unlucky, not having taken any prizes. The French fleet are lying in Toulon; they are determined to come out, and take all the English fleet, but I think they will find themselves mistaken. I am sorry to inform you that the Ça Ira is burnt at St. Fiorenzo by accident. I think we have been very unlucky with our two prizes—one retaken and the other burnt; however, I hope we shall make up for it this summer, by capturing the most part of the French fleet, if they will come out, which in all probability they will, and God send they may.

We expect to go to Leghorn shortly, when I shall hope to have the pleasure of hearing from old Godwick and its inhabitants. I said in my last we expected the Agamemnon would be ordered home the ensuing summer, but all our hopes have vanished, on account of the French fleet being so strong, amounting to no less than

sixteen sail of the line. They are constantly building; seven thousand men work in the dock-yards.

FROM CAPTAIN GARDINER.

Pisa, June 3rd, 1796.

MY DEAR MR. HOSTE,

If you have not of late months heard from your son, you must not attribute it to his want of attention to you; but to the temporary sacrifice of health he has made to the seducing charms of reputation. But to speak more seriously, what with fatigue, and growing at the same time, a slight fever came on, which he neglected and concealed until a very thin face betrayed the secret. Commodore Nelson immediately sent him on shore to a friend of his, Mr. Pollard, a merchant of Leghorn, whose family have taken such care of him, that nothing remains of his illness but weakness. He now eats with appetite, and to use his own words, sleeps the whole night, middle watch and all. For change of air he comes to me in a few days, and as my wife is with me, he will want neither nursing nor

amusement. I went yesterday to pass the day with him; we talked of Godwick and Norfolk till we almost thought ourselves there. You and Mrs. Hoste may make yourselves perfectly easy, for he has every favourable symptom of soon being able to return to his ship; we shall keep him till he can, without risking a relapse, renew his practice of cutting armed vessels out of the enemy's harbours.

Since the affair of Alasio, where he, commanding a small boat only, cut out a vessel loaded with one thousand seven hundred stand of arms, and a great quantity of ammunition, he has become such a favourite with the sailors, that with a confidence of success, little less than superstitious, they invariably ask that Hoste may command. I heard all these agreeable accounts from Mr. Pollard, and repeat them with equal pleasure; there cannot be a better testimony of his professional merit than Commodore Nelson's intention of taking him into the Blenheim, when he hoists his flag; nor can I give you a better proof of the excellence of his disposition, than the friendly visits every officer of the ship daily

paid him whilst the Agamemnon was at Leghorn.

I remain with just regard, your obliged friend, and servant, RICHARD GARDINER.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Leghorn, June 5th, 1796.

DEAR FATHER,

Doubtless before this you have heard by Captain Gardiner of the ill state of health I have been in; thank God, I am now quite stout again, and hope in a few days to be as well as ever. I was first taken ill on board the Agamemnon, when she luckily went into Leghorn for provisions, after a long cruise off Cape Delle Melle. She sailed again in a few days for her station, where she will remain some time. Commodore Nelson was so good as to leave me on shore at the house of an English gentleman in the neighbourhood of Leghorn, from whom I have received the greatest civilities. Mr. Pollard is the person I mean; he is a married man.

Mrs. Pollard is a very pleasant woman; she does every thing in her power to oblige one. She is a good doctor also, for when I first came

here I could hardly move, but had not been at the house four days, when, what with her nursing and the change of air, I was able to walk quite well. A very kind friend and companion who lives with her, Miss Wood, attended me with the greatest care when I was so very ill; indeed, if I had been her own brother, I could not have received more attention. I assure you, the civilities I received from Mr. and Mrs. Pollard, are such as I shall never be able to return, but I do every thing in my power to oblige them, you may be sure.

Captain Gardiner dined here last Wednesday; I then saw him for the first time since I left England; he was exceedingly civil to me, and invited me to his house at Pisa, where I shall remain a few days; he has got a very nice house there.

There has been a rebellion in Corsica, occasioned by the heavy taxes imposed by the Viceroy upon the inhabitants. I think the last they were to pay to the Viceroy, was £6000, which they refused; the Viceroy then thought, that what could not be effected by fair means, ought by foul, but in this also he was mistaken. He

marched out of Bastia at the head of five thousand men, in hopes of beating the Corsicans, and making them pay the tax, but had not proceeded far on his journey, when he suffered himself to be surrounded, and all his provisions cut off; seeing this, he thought of the best method to come to terms with the Corsicans, and all is now amicably settled. The Viceroy entered Bastia in triumph, after so successful an expedition.

The convoy arrived a few days ago, under his Majesty's ship Goliah; they all got in safe except two, which were left at Malaya; they were left behind on account of their bad sailing. The Goliah sailed this morning for the fleet, which is still cruising off Toulon, in daily expectation of an action with the French squadron, which consists of fifteen or sixteen sail of the line. The Diadem came in here yesterday with five prizes, taken by the Agamemnon and her squadron, out of a place called St. Reims, to the westward of Cape Delle Mille.

Just before I was taken ill, we cut out of Loano (a place to the westward of Vado) four vessels. In performing this service, I regret to say, Lieutenant Noble was wounded; the ball

went through his throat, but luckily did not touch his windpipe; I am happy to inform you he is now perfectly recovered. It is said that the Agamemnon's squadron has done more than all the English fleet put together. I should not know you were alive, were it not for letters which Mr. Weatherhead and Suckling receive; the former nearly made himself ill in attending on me when I was ill on board.

FROM LORD NELSON TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Captain, at Sea, Nov. 25th, 1796.

MY DEAR SIR,

Our friends in England sometimes accuse us of not writing so frequently as they wish us; on many occasions we can retort the charge; so says your good son William. I can assure you, which will be enough for a letter, that I have never once had cause to wish him any thing but what he is; his accidents, I can truly say, have so happily turned out, that I hope he is in no way the worse for them, but I have strongly recommended him, not to break any more limbs.

Nov. 28th.—I this day delivered to William

your letters of Oct. 31st: he says you seem to regret his not going home in the Agamemnon; had I thought so, I certainly should not have taken him from her.

I am, dear Sir, your very obedient servant,

HORATIO NELSON.

About this time another accident happened to young Hoste, from which he occasionally suffered to the end of his life. While playing in his berth he broke his leg in a double fracture, which confined him for six weeks. His excellent friend Mr. Weatherhead attended him with unremitting care, and with gratitude it is expressed in the following letter.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Captain, at sea, Nov. 26th, 1796.

MY DEAR FATHER,

Such a length of time has elapsed, and such a variety of circumstances have happened, since my last, that I am at a loss from what period to begin my letter, but, however, shall fix upon the evacuation of Corsica; as it has recently taken place, and therefore is fresh in my

memory. Doubtless you have heard of our being driven out of Leghorn by the *sans culottes.* I was at Leghorn at the time, at Mr. Pollard's, but made shift to escape in one of the Agamemnon's prizes, which was lying there. All Mr. Pollard's family and furniture were shipped on board this vessel, and we sailed from Leghorn the morning the French troops entered the town, and arrived at St. Fiorenzo a few days after. I shall say no more upon this subject, as you must have read in the newspapers a much better account of what happened after the English left it, than I can possibly give you.

Mr. Pollard, with his family, is gone to Naples, where most of the English merchants are. I believe he has not lost much, as the governor of Leghorn gave him timely notice that the French were coming.

I shall now begin upon the evacuation of Corsica, which was effected without any loss, though the French and Corsicans were assembled in great numbers on the island. I shall only speak about Bastia, as the commodore had the direction of embarking all the horses, provisions, &c. in that place. The French had landed about

six hundred men at Cape Corse, and being joined by all the mountaineers, marched directly to the gates of Bastia before we had the smallest notice of their approach; therefore it became necessary to embark the troops immediately, which was done after spiking all the cannon that were on the ramparts. The commodore attended the embarkation himself, and I believe was the last man who left the shore. Indeed, by his attention to his duty, he has gained the confidence of Sir John Jervis, who does nothing without first consulting him.

We sailed that morning for Port Ferrajo, and there disembarked the troops, and afterwards joined the fleet in St. Fiorenzo Bay, under the command of Sir J. Jervis. We remained there a few days after to complete our water, which being done, on the 2nd instant we sailed in company with the fleet, and a large convoy bound for Gibraltar, but have been beating to windward this fortnight past; indeed we have had very bad weather, always a gale of wind, or a calm, which are two things that a sailor must detest. However we got a fair breeze yesterday, and if it continues shall see Gibraltar to-morrow.

The Terpsichore, thirty-two guns, fell in with a Spanish forty-gun frigate, called the Mahon, and after a short action the Spaniard struck and was brought into Gibraltar. I believe I said in my last that the Agamemnon was going home, but that the commodore and his officers exchanged into the Captain. I had almost forgot to ask whether you have received Mr. Weatherhead's letter, which informed you of my having broke my leg. It is quite recovered, and as well as ever. I assure you I may thank Mr. W. in a great measure for my getting well so soon. I need not say how many obligations I lay under to him, as I am sure you are as well acquainted with his goodness of heart as I am.

TO MRS. HOSTE.

Captain, Gibraltar, Dec. 3, 1796.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

We found riding here Admiral Thompson in a forty-four-gun ship, but no line-of-battle ships. It is said a reinforcement of seventeen sail of the line are coming up the Mediterranean. I wish it may be true, as I think we shall be able to give the dons and les citoyens a

pretty good thrashing: a thing I most ardently wish for. I think I told you we expected to see the Spanish fleet. Indeed we had a very narrow escape.

The Resolution brig, with despatches from Port Ferrajo, was chased by their fleet, consisting of twenty-six sail of the line, and what by heaving her guns overboard, and cutting away her gangways, she escaped, and arrived in that condition at this place yesterday. They were cruising off Minorca, but as we kept the Barbary shore so close aboard, we missed them. There is a Spanish line-of-battle ship cruising off Cadiz, which the admiral having intelligence of, immediately despatched the Culloden and Zealous, of seventy-four guns each, with two frigates, to look after her, and she being lately seen in the Gut, I think there is every likelihood of her being taken. Pray, my dear mother, tell my father how happy it makes me to find by his letter that my conduct meets with his approbation. I assure you, I feel more pleasure from that one circumstance than from any thing that could possibly happen.

I have not heard of Mr. Gardiner since the evacuation of Leghorn; he left that place in his

Majesty's ship Comet, but we have been so busy, that really I am not certain where he is, though I have reason to believe he was left at Porto Ferrajo with the English troops. I cannot tell what we are going to do in the Mediterranean: there are various reports; some say we are going home, but that is too good news to be true; others say we are going up the Straits again; for my part, if I may be allowed to give my opinion, I cannot see what business we have there. The King of Naples has made peace, the ports of Leghorn and Genoa are shut against us, and Corsica is in the hands of the French; so that there is only a small part of the Isle of Elba in our possession, for which it is hardly worth keeping such a large force in the Mediterranean. Indeed, till a reinforcement joins us, we cannot go up, as the French and Spaniards have such a superiority. We hear that the French are besieging Ferrajo: if they should take it, they will get an immense booty; but however, as it is a strong place, I think they will be able to hold out till we relieve them. I was very sorry to hear Dixon is in such bad health, but I hope the ensuing summer will restore him perfectly.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Captain, Feb. 16th, 1797.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I am happy to inform you, that on the 14th instant we fell in with the Spanish fleet off Cape St. Vincent, consisting of one four-decker, seven three-deckers, and seventeen two-deckers; and that after an action which lasted from noon till six in the afternoon, we found ourselves in possession of two three-deckers and two two-deckers. I have not time to give you the particulars of the engagement, but leave you to judge of the nature of it when you hear that the Captain was engaged six hours within half pistol shot of a three-decker and a two-decker, and at last boarded and took them, after an obstinate resistance on the side of the Spaniards. Never, I believe, was there such an action fought, as for fifteen sail of the line to attack twenty-five, and take four sail. It is reported that the St. Trinidad, a Spanish four-decker, was so completely beaten, and so much damaged in the hull, that she went down the night after the action. Our loss is not so great as one might expect, after

such a hard-fought battle. We cannot exactly ascertain how many there are killed, but between twenty and twenty-five, and fifty-one wounded. The two Spaniards that struck to us had between three and four hundred killed and wounded. The Spanish admiral was dangerously wounded, and in consequence of his wounds died yesterday morning. We are now lying in Lagos Bay, where we shall put the prizes in order as far as possible to carry them round to Lisbon. On our arrival there, I shall write to my mother, and give her a better account than I can at present, as we are so busy I have hardly time to write. I must now conclude with love to all.

FROM SIR HORATIO NELSON, TO REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Irresistible, Lagos Bay, Feb. 17th, 1797.

MY DEAR SIR,

You will be anxious to hear a line of your good and brave William after the sharp services of the Captain on the 14th. I have hitherto said so much of my dear William, that I can only repeat, his gallantry never can be exceeded, and that each day rivets him stronger to my heart.

With best respects to Mrs. Hoste, believe me, my dear Sir, your most obedient servant,

HORATIO NELSON.

The Captain is so cut up, that I am obliged to shift my pendant.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Theseus, May 27th, 1797.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I received the packet of letters from Godwick a few days ago, and need not say how happy they made me, to hear that you, my dear mother, and all were well and happy. Never did I feel more satisfaction than on the receipt of your kind letter, to find that my conduct on that memorable day met with your approbation. Believe me, that will be always my first wish; the second, to merit the esteem and confidence of my friends. Such a variety of circumstances has happened since my last letter, dated in February, that I hardly know from what period to begin this.

I am afraid you will blame me for not writing before, but I think, when you have heard my story, you will alter your tone. Mr. Weather-

head wrote to his friends when at Lisbon, and told them to inform you of my having gone into the Irresistible with Admiral Nelson immediately after the fleet arrived there, and sailed the following day.

I received your letters dated January at that time, but had it not in my power to answer them before the ship sailed. Our cruise was very unsuccessful, not having taken one single prize. I remained on board there about a fortnight, and then joined my ship off Cape St. Vincent. I am sorry to say I can call her so no longer, as yesterday Admiral Nelson, with all the Agamemnon's officers, including myself, were exchanged into the Theseus, and so many of the Theseus went into the Captain. I can give you no account of my new ship, but at present think there is none preferable to the Captain. I assure you I was very sorry to leave my old shipmates, especially after having been so much in action with them, and where they so eminently distinguished themselves.

We have been up the Straits again since my last, to bring the Ferrajo convoy down; I am happy to say they arrived (under convoy of the Captain and two other line-of-battle ships) safe

at Gibraltar a few weeks ago, which is the first port I have been in these ten weeks past, having been constantly cruising either off the Cape or else off Cadiz; and believe me, I had not an opportunity of sending any letters to England before the present.

You wish me, you say in your letter, to give you an accurate account of the action. I think you have reason; as certainly my scrawl on the 16th of February was not the most elegant epistle, but I hope you will excuse it, for at that time we were all hurry and confusion. However, I believe it fully answered the purpose it was written for, in letting you know that poor Billy Shanks was among the living, and ready to lend a hand to thrash those cowardly Dons once more. Cowards indeed they are in every sense of the word. There is a great talk of their coming out in a few days; I wish most heartily they may, as I think Sir John Jervis will then have a better opportunity of displaying his courage and his conduct than in the last action. There will be more of them, and consequently more to take. Another reason I have for wishing them to come out is, our brave admiral will have an opportunity of

initiating the Theseus crew into his fighting rules, so strictly observed by him in the Agamemnon and Captain. They are a fine set of men, but have not been in action since they have been in commission.

June 3rd.—We have got the command of the in-shore squadron, and are at anchor about four miles from the harbour off Cadiz. We have a fine view of the Spanish fleet. They hourly threaten to come out, and drive us off their port, but I am afraid it will all end in nothing.

While Nelson was employed in the bombardment of Cadiz, Hoste received a wound in the right hand. Considerable fears were apprehended of a lock-jaw; but happily for himself, his family, and his country, he soon recovered. No mention is made of it in his private correspondence, for his feelings were too sensitive and too warm to occasion unnecessary alarm among his friends, or to increase the anxiety of his parents. Those who are most alive to the sufferings of others, are most likely to suppress their own. These events were followed by the well-known expedition to Teneriffe, and the unfortunate attack on Santa Cruz.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Theseus, August 15th, 1797. At sea.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I must now sit down and give you a detail of our unfortunate expedition against the island of Teneriffe. However unpleasant the task may be, yet I am sure it will come better from my hands than from anybody else; as it will convince you that I am safe, and believe me, I wish I could say the same of every one on board. We left the fleet off Cadiz the 14th day of June, in company of two line-of-battle ships, three frigates, the Fox cutter, and a mortar-boat. Admiral Nelson's orders were (I have it from himself), to make a vigorous attack on the island of Teneriffe at the town of Santa Cruz.

On the 20th we made for the island, and early on the 22nd the marines and small-armed men belonging to the squadron (in all between six and seven hundred men) landed about two miles to the eastward of the town; but they were obliged to embark again on board the frigates before night, the inhabitants being alarmed, and not any appearance of success from that quarter.

It was then resolved to attack the town the night of the 24th. I think you cannot have a better idea of what happened, than by giving you a copy of the ship's log. It will be necessary to tell you for your better information, that the Leander, fifty-gun ship, joined the squadron the 23rd.

At five, came to an anchor to the eastward of the town, in company with the Culloden, Zealous, and Leander line-of-battle ships, and Seahorse, Terpsichore, and Emerald frigates, cutter and gun-boats standing towards the town. At half-past seven the mortar-boat began to throw shells into the town. At half-past ten the marines and seamen from the different ships put off and began to row towards the mole head, under the command of our brave admiral. At one, A.M. commenced one of the heaviest cannonading I ever was witness to from the town upon our boats, likewise a very heavy fire of musketry, which continued without intermission for the space of four hours.

At two, Admiral Nelson returned on board, being dreadfully wounded in the right arm with a grape-shot. I leave you to judge of my situa-

tion when I beheld our boat approach with him, who I may say has been a second father to me, his right arm dangling by his side, while with the other he helped himself to jump up the ship's side, and with a spirit that astonished every one, told the surgeon to get his instruments ready, for he knew he must lose his arm, and that the sooner it was off the better. He underwent the amputation with the same firmness and courage that have always marked his character, and I am happy to say is now in a fair way of recovery.

At four, several of the boats returned to the ship, not having been able to land by reason of the fire kept up by the enemy. They gave us the unpleasant intelligence that a twenty-four pounder had struck the Fox, and that she went down immediately, with one hundred and fifty souls on board, the major part of whom were drowned. All the boats of the squadron were employed saving the men, the batteries keeping up an incessant fire. At daylight the enemy began to cannonade the shipping, which we returned, and soon silenced them. We now began to entertain bad hopes of our men on shore; and not without reason, for in less than half an hour

afterwards, a boat that had escaped from the shore informed us all our people were obliged to surrender, on condition that they were immediately sent on board their respective ships, which was granted by the governor.

At nine, a flag of truce came off from Santa Cruz with a Spanish officer and the captain of the Emerald, who, besides other bad news, informed us that Lieutenant Weatherhead was mortally wounded. This was a stroke which, indeed, I could hardly stand against; however, convinced that it was not a time to give way, I got everything in my power ready for his reception, and about eleven he was conveyed on board in a cradle. The surgeon examined his wound, and said he thought it impossible he could live long. I am sorry to say his words proved too true. And now am I come to the worst part of my story. He lingered out to Saturday the 29th of July, and then expired, seemingly without pain. In losing him, I lost a good companion and a true friend; and I believe I may say the nation lost as brave an officer as ever stepped on board a ship. He was the darling of the ship's company, and univer-

sally beloved by every person who had the pleasure of his acquaintance. His body was committed to the deep on Sunday the 30th; three volleys of musketry fired in honour to his memory.

We left the island of Teneriffe the 27th, and are now on our return to Cadiz. I shall not finish this until we join the fleet, where I shall be able to give you a short account how things go on in that quarter. I had almost forgot to say, that on the death of Weatherhead, Admiral Nelson gave me a commission to act as lieutenant in his vacancy; happy would it have made me, had it been in any other, as I shall ever regret the loss of him.

Theseus, off Cadiz, August 17th, 1797.

We arrived in the fleet this afternoon, and found a reinforcement of four sail of the line had arrived. Admiral Nelson was well enough to go on board the Ville de Paris. He returned on board at four this afternoon. I hear he is going home in the Seahorse. I am afraid I shall not be able to accompany him, as he tells me if I were to go to England before my time was out, the Admiralty would not confirm me.

He also says, I have some time in the Grampus, forty-four guns. He wishes you to send my time out immediately. I must now conclude. Pray remember me to my dear mother and all the family. I am afraid you will think me abrupt. You must suppose I am rather low-spirited about losing two such friends, but thank God the worst is over.

TO THE SAME.

Theseus, off Cadiz, Sept. 13th, 1797.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I have to inform you of my still being on board the Theseus, although I was in doubt of it when the Seahorse sailed, but have had an interview with Lord St. Vincent. He informed me, that I should remain in the Theseus till peace, and then he would put me into some frigate, that would be left on the station until my time as midshipman expires, which I told him would be in January. I like my situation on board the Theseus very much; we have got a good captain, and I mess in the ward room with a jovial set of officers. Pray don't you wish me joy of leaving the lower regions, after a spell of

five years? The time passes on merrily, although I often think of old Godwick, and heartily wish I could call myself one of its inhabitants.

I am the only remaining officer of all the old Agamemnon's on board. Nesbitt is made captain of the Dolphin hospital ship. Pretty quick promotion, I think. I suppose before this reaches England, you will have seen my old commander, Admiral Nelson; pray make my best respects, and tell him I long to be under his command again. I am afraid poor Weatherhead's death will greatly affect his family.

We hear that the Congress is still sitting, but gets on very slowly, on account of the disagreement between the Directory and the Council of Five Hundred. The armies of the Sambre and the Meuse are greatly in arrears, twenty-five thousand of them marching to Paris to support the Directory against the legislative power.

A report is current through the fleet, that we are to be in England before Christmas, peace or not peace; I think it very probable, as we have got no port to winter in this year. The Portuguese say that no more than five sail of the line may anchor in the Tagus at one time. They

are a set of cowardly fellows; in my opinion, not a pin difference between them and the Spaniards. Should the fleet proceed to England, I shall not be able to accompany them, as, were I to go home before my time was expired, the Admiralty would not confirm me.

FROM SIR HORATIO NELSON, TO REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Bath, 1797.

MY DEAR SIR,

I did write a line to Mr. Coke, to tell him how I had disposed of his recommendations, both of whom have done him so much honour; but one gallant fellow is gone; your dear good son is as gallant, and I hope he will long live to honour Norfolk and England. I grieved to have left him, but it is necessary; and Lord St. Vincent will continue to be his kind protector and friend: his worth as a man and as an officer, exceeds all which the most sincere friend can say of him. I pray God to bless my dear William; happy father in such a son.

As to myself, I suppose I was getting well too fast, for I am beset with a physician, surgeon, and apothecary, and to say the truth, I am suffering

much pain with some fever; but time, I hope, will restore me to tolerable health. Captain Ralph Willet Miller is captain of the Theseus, one who loves William, and is the only truly virtuous man I ever saw. I beg my best respects to Mrs. Hoste, and believe me, dear Sir, your most obedient servant, HORATIO NELSON.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Theseus, off Cadiz, Sept. 17th, 1797.

MY DEAR FATHER,

The blockade still continues; it cannot last much longer, bad weather approaching fast, and no fleet (without great danger) can lie here in the winter. I wish most heartily it was ended. The same dull scene every day. No prospect of taking any prizes. Not a word of news to be heard of any kind. The Spaniards still flatter us with the old story of peace, although we are not quite so sanguine as formerly. We have had several skirmishes with the Spanish gun-boats lately.

On the morning of the 9th, we had a pretty smart touch with them. At daylight, we saw a square-rigged vessel to the south of the light-

house, standing in for Cadiz. The signal, as usual, was immediately made for the boats of the fleet to chase her. The Dons, seeing our intention, sent all their gun-boats, and the men of war's launches, to assist in bringing her in; but they were soon convinced that Englishmen were not to be frightened by squibs, for in spite of a very heavy fire, our boats boarded and soon towed her into the fleet. I was in the Theseus pinnace. She proved to be a Moorish vessel from Tangiers, bound to Cadiz. The admiral finding he could not make a prize of her, she was discharged, so all our fighting was for nothing.

I have just received a letter from an old shipmate, who is on board the St. Salvadore; he mentions that the Lisbon convoy were then under sail for England, in company with the Victory, Britannia, St. George, Egmont, and the three Spanish prizes. My old ship, the Captain, sailed from Gibraltar a few days back to join them. The Diadem sailed yesterday for the same purpose, and the Barfleur, I believe, will bring up the rear. It is generally supposed to be the prelude to all the fleet going home.

Our force at present consists of twenty sail of the line, besides frigates; rather small, I think, in comparison with the Spaniards, who have at least thirty-two.

I suppose you have heard of the Portuguese having made peace with England. I wish it may prove so, most heartily.

TO THE SAME.

Tagus, October, 1797.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I am happy to hear our gallant admiral is so well. I read in the papers of his reception on landing at Portsmouth, which was gracious indeed, though nothing more than his services merited. When you write to, or see him again, pray present my best respects, and tell him I ardently long to serve under his flag. I am perfectly comfortable on board the Theseus. With such a man as Captain Miller, indeed, who would not be so? Endowed with a perfect knowledge of his profession, he likewise possesses a most amiable disposition; and in my opinion, the person who feels himself uncomfortable under his command (I mean with respect to an

officer), must be miserable indeed under that of any other.

You ask me in your letter, if I live in the ward-room? Yes, I do, and great is the difference I find between it and the cockpit. I should now be able to receive you in *style*, on your coming on board; but when that time will be, God knows. I sometimes think it will be too great happiness for me to see the inhabitants of old Godwick again, after so long an absence; and as Mr. Dick observes, *Bedlam* would be the properest place for me.

TO THE SAME.

Theseus, River Tagus, February 8th, 1798.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I have just time to say that I have passed my examination, and have enclosed my passing certificate. This morning the signal was made for an enemy's fleet in the offing. We sail to-night to meet them; not to meet them only, but just to give them a second 14th of February. We are all in high health and spirits, in hopes of giving the Dons a good thrashing. We are now clearing away for ac-

tion, the signal has been made for battle, and I hope before to-morrow night we shall have half a dozen prizes in tow at least. Duty calls me away, so must conclude this scrawl, and with love to all at Godwick,

I remain, W. HOSTE.

TO MISS HOSTE.

At sea, April 11th, 1798.

MY DEAR SISTER,

I shall sit down and inform you of all the news I can gather together, though the dull life we lead at sea will afford but very little. I shall begin with our leaving Lisbon, which we did on the 2nd of March, and after a passage of ten or twelve days, arrived safe at Gibraltar with a convoy.

I had been there several times before, but never had the curiosity to examine the fortifications till now. We made a party on board, and went entirely round it. The caves are wonderful indeed, and well worth seeing; one especially exceeds anything I ever saw. They call it Cornwallis cave, after that General; and how they got guns up there appears to me

astonishing. Well may they call it the Rock of Gibraltar, for a rock it is in every sense of the word. It is greatly improved in strength since the last siege, and the description I could give of it, would fall infinitely short of its deserts. In my opinion, it would be a capital place for the French Directory to send an army to attack, as I understand their military begin to be rather troublesome.

I had a ride out on the neutral ground one morning with another of our officers, and went as far as the Spanish lines. The Spaniards were very civil, and saluted us as we rode along their works, but I believe more through fear than any thing else; for the governor threatens to open the batteries upon them, if the least insult is offered to any English officers.

General O'Hara gave a ball to the officers of the army and navy whilst we were there. I was not of the party, though invited; you know I never cut a *figure* in dancing when in England, and I assure you I have not improved much since, for God knows we have something else to do besides dancing. We have often a reel on board, and I am a capital hand at it; but a

country dance is quite out of my latitude. I am sure you would laugh most heartily were you to see our ball-room and music. Figure to yourself a poor unfortunate fiddler, stuck up in one corner of the ward-room, striking up some merry tune, whilst we, from the rolling of the ship, or the creaking of her sides, can hardly hear him at the other: however, it is what we are used to, and it gives us as much pleasure for the moment as the best band at St. James's.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Theseus, off Cadiz, April 16th, 1798.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I am happy to find you have received my letter of the 8th of February. I hope, when you consider the time and circumstances we were in when I wrote it, you will excuse it. I know nothing but the hurry and confusion we were in could justify such a scrawl to my father. I was sorry I had sent it afterwards, judging the anxiety that would prevail at Godwick on my account. The Spanish rascals were, however, too quick for us; and after leav-

ing a strong squadron off Cadiz, Lord St. Vincent returned to the Tagus, where the Theseus remained about forty-eight hours, and then sailed with a convoy to Gibraltar.

I received the letters from the Marchioness Townsend, and Mr. Coke, directed to Lord St. Vincent. It is needless to say how much I am obliged to them. I presented the letters, but have received no answer as yet. Lord St. Vincent, I understand from Captain Miller, inquired very kindly after me; indeed, ever since Admiral Nelson left the station, he has been remarkably civil. The day before my examination, he sent for me on board the Ville de Paris, and took me into his own cabin. I could not help laughing when he laid hold of me and turned me round three or four times, saying, I was a *smart young fellow*. He asked me if I had not had both my legs broke in the service, which I answered in the affirmative;—whether I had heard from home lately,—and hoped all my friends were well. I assure you, my heart was so full with gratitude to a person whom I had never seen more than once, that I

could hardly speak. I was to have dined with him the next day, but the account of the Spanish fleet being out, and our sailing, prevented it.

I see you still adhere to your old line of politics. I think ministers have got themselves into a scrape; their *begging boxes* at every corner of a street, plainly show to what *straits* they are reduced, and to use your own words, whilst they can raise a guinea, they will continue the war.

We laugh here at the threats of the French invading England. I wish they may try, merely to convince them that Englishmen are not to be frightened by their blustering or threats. Buonaparte is, we understand, to command the Army of England; I think he will find it rather more difficult to pluck his laurels there than in Italy.

There is a relation of Mr. Weatherhead's on board the Terpsichore, on the Lisbon station; if I could be of any service to him, or to any of that worthy family, they have only to hint it to you, and I shall esteem myself happy in performing it — the only return I can make for the many civilities and attentions I received

from their late worthy son. His memory is still fresh in my mind, and I can only say how much I regret his loss: it is not my wish to dwell any longer upon a subject which I well know must give us both pain.

We left Gibraltar the 31st of March with a convoy bound from Lisbon, but there being little wind, the gun-boats from Algesiras came out and attacked us. We fired at them from ten o'clock in the morning till five o'clock in the afternoon, and did them considerable damage. They had six or seven killed, their rear-admiral and a good many men wounded. We had not a man hurt, nor received any damage whatever. Two frigates joined us in the gut, and took charge of the convoy. We joined Admiral Parker off Cadiz.

Lord St. Vincent arrived here yesterday, and the blockade has commenced. We are all anchored the same as last year. I am sorry to inform you of the loss of the Lively frigate, which got on shore by accident off Rota, close to Cadiz. There is a court-martial on the captain and officers to-day; it is the general opinion that they will be acquitted.

TO THE SAME.

Theseus, off Cadiz, April 29th, 1798.

MY DEAR FATHER,

We are still at the old work, blockading Cadiz, and our ship belongs to the advanced squadron in a very active situation. The Alexander, seventy-four guns, got becalmed under the batteries a few days ago, and received some damage.

About fifty-eight gun-boats came out of Cadiz and attacked her; they killed two of her men, wounded eight, and did her some mischief in the hull. I assure you the gun-boats begin to be very formidable.

The Spanish fishermen report they have got one hundred and sixty boats ready for service, each carrying a twenty-six pounder in the bow. One shot which struck the Alexander weighed fifty-two pounds, so it is impossible to ascertain their true force. The English fleet off Cadiz consists at present of twenty sail of the line and three frigates. The Spaniards have thirty-three sail of the line, eight frigates, and three brigs ready for sea; yet with so great a superiority in

point of numbers they dare not come out and face us—so much for Spanish bravery. Various are the opinions about them: many say they will venture out; for my own part I do not think they will attempt it, unless compelled by their own batteries. We are plentifully supplied with vegetables of every kind; fish in abundance. It is quite common to see green peas and beans at every ward-room table in the fleet. Of course we are in high health and spirits, longing for an opportunity of giving the Dons a good drubbing. I hope you will excuse a short letter. A lieutenant from the Ville de Paris is on board the Theseus, waiting for letters. I hope my dear mother is quite recovered; for although you did not mention her being ill, yet the Marquis of Townsend's note convinced me all was not right. Believe me, the bare idea of my mother's illness made me shudder. I shall anxiously wait to hear from Godwick. I have not heard a syllable about those letters from Mr. Coke and Marquis Townsend. Lord St. Vincent has been so busy, that I do not wonder at it. Most of our officers having subscribed one month's pay for the defence of the country, I

hope you will have no objection to my subscribing the same, as I think you would not wish me to be particular. With love to all at Godwick.

Early in the year 1798 Sir Horatio Nelson rejoined the fleet under Earl St. Vincent, off Cadiz, and was immediately detached to the Mediterranean, with a small squadron (among which the Theseus was included), to ascertain the object of the expedition then about to sail from Toulon. Every one knows the result. After an anxious pursuit of the enemy, the French fleet was completely defeated on the 1st of August at the glorious battle of the Nile, when for his distinguished conduct Hoste was appointed to the command of the Mutine brig.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Mutine, Naples Bay, Sept. 3, 1798.

MY DEAR FATHER,

By my letter of the 3rd of August I informed you that the Mutine brig would carry the despatches to England; those orders were afterwards countermanded, and the Leander,

fifty guns, took them. I mention this that you may not be disappointed on the arrival of the Leander.

Captain Berry, who took the despatches, of course made a vacancy in the Vanguard; the captain of the Mutine took his place, and the admiral has been so good as to appoint me to the command of the brig. You may guess my astonishment when I heard of it. I was on board of the Tonnant, one of the prizes, when I received a note from Captain Miller, hinting that I should be promoted, and desiring me to return on board the Theseus immediately. The next day I was ordered on board the Vanguard, and the admiral gave me acting orders for the Mutine, and said there would be no difficulty in getting me confirmed. The brig was immediately ordered to Naples with the duplicates of the despatches. The signal officer of the Vanguard takes them to Naples, who will forward them to Godwick. We are now standing in to Naples Bay, and expect to anchor there by one o'clock. We left Alexandria the 13th of August. Every thing was going on as it should do. The prizes were refitted, and it was expected they would

sail the 14th. Their destination is, I believe, for Gibraltar.

Admiral Nelson, who is very near recovered from his wound, remains out with seven sail of the line, off Alexandria. I mentioned in my last that I should give you an account of the action, but I think you will be able to learn more from a copy of a letter belonging to one of the officers of the Eastern army to his wife, which I will enclose.

Buonaparte is at Grand Cairo, in a most horrid condition, surrounded by the Arabs and Mamelukes, who massacre every rascal they can catch: without water, in a strange country, very little provisions, and, to complete the business, his army in a state of mutiny, I must leave you to judge of the comfortable situation of the conqueror of Italy. Our brave admiral says he has got into a pretty scrape, and cannot for his life see how he can get out of it. Their intention was, I believe, on the supposition that the Arabs would join them, to have cut a passage through the isthmus of Suez into the Red Sea, with the idea of destroying our East India settlements. But I think, and sincerely hope, their designs are

frustrated; and if one gets back to tell the melancholy story, I am much mistaken. Several of Buonaparte's and his officers' letters have been intercepted, all tending to the wish of returning to France; in short, there is a total despondency in the French army. The soldiers have an idea they are sent to be massacred. I think, if once they entertain that idea, it is all over with them.

We have this moment let go our anchor in the Port of Naples. An officer from the English minister is now come on board, who says, that a courier will set off for Vienna immediately. I have not time for any more, else with pleasure could I fill the sheet. The very next post shall bring you my adventures at Naples, in a letter to my dear mother. I sincerely hope all the family are as well and as happy as I am at the present moment; it could only be heightened by the sight of the inhabitants of Godwick. Pray remember me to my uncle and aunt Hoste,—tell the former the sword he gave me in England has not got rusty for want of use.

Liberty. Equality.

Rosetta in Egypt, 17th Thermidor, sixth of the French Republic, or 3rd August, 1798.

From E. Poussulque, comptroller-general of the expenses of the Eastern army, and administrator-general of the finances.

We have just been witnesses, my dear friend, to a naval combat the most bloody and unfortunate that for many ages has taken place. As yet we know not all the circumstances, but those which we are already acquainted with, are frightful in the extreme. The French squadron, consisting of thirteen sail of the line, one of which was a three-decker of one hundred and twenty guns, and three eighty gun ships, were anchored in the Bay of Aboukir, or Carrossa, the only one that exists on all the coast of Egypt. For these eight days past, several ships and frigates belonging to the English have at different times been reconnoitring the position of our fleet, so that we have been in momentary expectation of being attacked. In a direct line from Aboukir to Rosetta, the distance is about four leagues and a half; from the height of the latter our fleet is perfectly distinguished.

The 14th of this month, at half-past five o'clock in the morning, we heard the firing of cannon. This was the commencement of the battle. We immediately got upon the terraces, the tops of the highest houses, and little eminences, from whence we plainly distinguished ten English ships of the line. The others we could not see.

The cannonading was very heavy until about a quarter of nine o'clock, when, favoured by the night, we perceived an immense light, which announced to us that some ship was on fire; the thunder of the cannon was heard with redoubled fury, and the ship on fire blew up with a dreadful explosion, which was heard at Rosetta in the same manner as the explosion of the Gunell was heard at Paris. When this accident happened, the most profound silence took place for the space of about ten minutes; from the moment of the explosion until our hearing it, might take up two. The firing commenced again, and continued without intermission until about three o'clock in the morning, when it ceased almost entirely until five, when it commenced again with as great vivacity as ever. I

placed myself on a tower, which is about cannon shot from Rosetta, and which is called Aboul Mourdour; from thence I could plainly see the whole battle. At eight o'clock I perceived a ship on fire, and in about half an hour it blew up, similar to that last night. One ship, until the moment of her explosion, was not perceived on fire at all; the other ship moved to a greater distance from the shore, and the fire on board her apparently diminished, and it appeared to us that the crew had succeeded in extinguishing it altogether; during this time the cannonading redoubled. A large ship, entirely dismasted, was on shore on the coast. I perceived others among the fleet in a similar manner dismasted, but the squadron so mingled among each other, that it was impossible to distinguish French from English, nor on whose side the advantage was. The firing continued with unceasing vivacity until about two o'clock. After midday of the fifteenth, and at this hour, we perceived two sail of the line and two frigates under a press of sail on a wind standing to the eastward. We perceived the whole four were under French colours; no other vessel made any movement, and the firing ceased entirely.

Towards six o'clock in the evening, I returned to the tower of Aboul Mourdour, to reconnoitre the position of the two fleets: it was the same as at two o'clock; the four ships were abreast the mouth of the Nile. We knew not what to think or conjecture. Twenty-four hours passed without having any person to give us any detail, and in our situation it was impossible to procure any by land by reason of the Arabs, who were assembled between Aboukir and Rosetta; and by sea on account of the difficulty of getting out of the opening of the branch of the Nile. You may judge of our impatience and perplexity; nothing good could be acquired from this silence; however, we were obliged to pass the night in uncertainty. At last, on the morning of the 16th, a boat which left Alexandria in the night, gave us some details, though little tending to our comfort. They told us that some officers of the French fleet, who escaped in a boat to Alexandria, had reported, that on the commencement of the battle, Admiral Brueys had received three severe wounds, one in the head and two in the body; that, notwithstanding, he persisted in keeping his station on the arms chest, and that

a fourth shot took him in the body, and cut him in two; at the same time, a shot took off the captain of the ship Casa Bianca; that at this time they perceived the ship to be on fire, in such a manner as not to be able to extinguish it; and at last, that the ship had blown up about ten o'clock at night. They added, that our fleet was totally destroyed and lost, with the exception of the four ships escaped, but that the rest were entirely ruined.

I returned to the tower, when I found things exactly in the same situation as yesterday; they were even so last night and this morning. I have now to say how they appear from the castle of Aboukir on the left, sweeping the horizon on to the right. Four ships were without masts and under English colours; the second and third are in good state, but cannot distinguish *their* colours; the fourth has lost her main-mast,—this morning she hoisted her fore-top-mast stay-sail, and set some after sail; the seventh is without top-gallant-masts; the eighth is totally dismasted; the ninth is dismasted, with the exception of her bowsprit; the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth, form a kind of group, having only seven masts

between them; the fourteenth has only her top-masts; the fifteenth has lost her fore and mizen-top-gallant-masts; the sixteenth is entirely dismasted; the seventeenth has lost her top-gallant-masts; the eighteenth has only her foremast; the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first form a group, having only four masts between them; the twenty-second is entirely dismasted and on shore; she has English colours up; the people on board her are trying to raise her masts and get her afloat; the twenty-third is in good state, and under English colours; the twenty-fourth is also in good state. This is all I can distinguish, from which results, that although the English have had the advantage, they have been very roughly handled, since they could not follow the vessels which went away on the 19th; for these two days past their ships have been perfectly inactive and seemingly destroyed.

This morning news has arrived here from Alexandria, which confirms our losses. Rear-Admiral D——st is killed, also Vice-Admiral Blanquet Duchartu. Five ships have struck their colours. The Tonnant was the last ship in action; Dupletem, who commanded her, had his

two legs taken off by cannon shot. The ships that escaped are, the Guillaume Tell and the Genereux, with the frigates La Diane and La Justice. They say it was La Artemisa which blew up yesterday morning.

Many things relative to the battle are still to be learned: they say the English admiral has sent a flag of truce to Alexandria, demanding that they should receive and take care of the wounded, which amount to fifteen hundred; they will send us all our prisoners. As yet I am ignorant of what has been decided on. You will receive in France the official accounts of us and the English; I know not what they will say, but you may depend on what I have written, because it is what I have seen. Communicate my letter to Citoyen Courcey; his son, who ought to have given him these accounts, is by me otherwise occupied; he has written six letters.

I have had, since my arrival here, my portrait taken, by an able artist, Citoyen Berry; it is said to be very like, but we have so many English round us, that for fear of its falling into other hands, I have just sent it; I could wish to bring it myself. Be assured, that as soon as I can

obtain the permission, which I shall not cease to solicit, I shall take my departure.

As to what remains to be said—I am in good health. To-morrow I take my departure for Cairo, with the money and paymaster-general, two armed boats with two hundred and fifty men as an escort. We go by the Nile.

Adieu, my dear little girl, love me always, and recall me often to the memory of all our friends. I embrace you and also my children.

(Signed,) E. POUSSULQUE.

Captain Hoste having taken the command of the Mutine Brig, was ordered to proceed to Gibraltar, and convey the intelligence of the battle of the Nile. The news was received with that enthusiasm which a conquest, and not a victory, (as the darling hero of the English navy emphatically termed it,) so justly called forth, and so richly deserved. To Europe it was a happy day, to England it was a proud one; but to the zealous pupil of such a patron, it was something infinitely more than any language can describe. When this gratifying duty was performed, he hastened to Cadiz, impatient to obtain the con-

firmation of that appointment which Lord Nelson's discernment had led him to make. He was received in fact, as he might well have hoped for; his expectations realized; his appointment confirmed; and few were so happy as "the smart, young" commander of the Mutine Brig, when he was ordered to rejoin Lord Nelson.

TO MRS. HOSTE.

Mutine, April 10th, 1799.

MY DEAR DEAR MOTHER,

What words can I find forcible enough to convey to you an idea of the happiness I felt at the receipt of your truly affectionate letter? To find that you were all in health and happiness, after such a length of time had elapsed since my hearing from you last, and that every thing at Godwick went on as it ought to do, believe me, my dear mother, it almost made me mad with joy. It is impossible to express what I felt at the moment I received them. I had so often flattered myself with the hopes of getting letters on my arrival in port, and had so often been disappointed, that I almost began to despair; but when once I saw my father's hand-writing, my joy was

almost beyond bearing, and for a while I forgot the service and *Mutine also,* in the pleasure I felt in hearing from you. I assure you, that we sailors, although far distant, feel and think of our absent friends, (I speak of myself,) as much as any people can possibly do.

I believe I mentioned in my letter dated 3rd September, that we left Lord Nelson off the mouth of the Nile, the 13th of August, and after a passage of three weeks arrived safe in Naples. You can conceive better than I can describe the joy that was felt by every true friend of his country on hearing of that glorious action of the 1st of August. We arrived in Naples about three o'clock in the afternoon of the 1st of September, and after getting pratique, Captain Capel and myself proceeded to Sir William Hamilton's, the English minister at the court of Naples, where he delivered the despatches, and the account of the victory. Lady Hamilton (whom I suppose you have heard of) received us very kindly indeed. I had a letter of introduction from Lord Nelson to her, so that I soon became acquainted; and the civilities I received, both from Sir William and his lady, I shall always remember with gratitude.

As it was necessary that the court should be informed of our arrival, and of the victory, we went to the palace, accompanied by Sir William Hamilton, who presented us both to the Prime Minister, General Acton, who of course expressed his joy at the laurels we had received off the Nile. On our leaving the palace we were met by Lady Hamilton, who made us get into her carriage and parade through the streets till dark; she had a bandeau round her forehead with the words "Nelson and Victory." The populace saw and understood what it meant, and "Viva Nelson!" resounded through the streets. You can have no idea of the rejoicings that were made throughout Naples at the time. Bonfires and illuminations all over the town; indeed, my dear mother, it would require an abler pen than I am master of, to give you any account but what will fall infinitely short of what was the case. We went to the Opera, and were in the minister's box with him and his lady. Not a French cockade was to be seen; all expressed their joy at seeing us, as it confirmed the account of the victory, which before they had only heard from report.

The next day Captain Capel proceeded on

his passage to England, so I was left quite alone. We had been out so long a cruise before the action, that I was in want of almost every thing. Lady Hamilton was good enough to assist me until I was completely fitted out. I lived at Sir William Hamilton's house during my stay, and was entertained by him with the most distinguished attention.

A few days after, I was surprised by an officer arriving from the palace and inquiring for me: on my being presented to him, he gave me a note from the Queen, (but whom I was to consider *incog.*) and a small box with a very handsome diamond ring inclosed in it; two hundred guineas for the brig's company, and six pipes of wine and two calves for the same purpose. I returned an answer, which was not adequate to the occasion; and on her birthday, which happened a few days after, I dressed the Mutine completely in colours, which is reckoned a token of respect.

Such, my dear mother, is the history of the ring, which my father said you were afraid was for private service, but I hope you are convinced now it was out of regard for the English nation;

and such is the immense reward, mentioned by the French, to the officer who brought the account of the victory.

I am afraid, my dear mother, it will be some time before I arrive in England yet. I often think, and flatter myself what happiness awaits me on my arrival at Godwick; what a length of time has elapsed since I left England; and what a variety of circumstances has happened during that time. I think I could find my way from Titteshall to Godwick, but no further. I recollect your's and my father's countenance, but the rest of the family would appear quite strangers,—I mean in their outward appearance. I often think I see you all sit down to dinner, and the chair on the starboard side of my father left vacant, which once I used to call my place. I suppose George has taken possession of it.

Returning to the fleet under Lord Nelson, Captain Hoste was sent to Smyrna, to forward despatches to Constantinople; and on rejoining the fleet, was actively employed in the Bay of Naples, and off Palermo, during the perilous state of that kingdom.

On the 3rd of February, observing several vessels at anchor in Sorento Bay, he stood close in, and despatched the cutter and jolly boat, which, under the protection of her guns, succeeded in cutting out an armed French Neapolitan polacre, which lay outside, notwithstanding the spirited fire she kept up against the boats, ably seconded from the houses on the shore. The captured ship, La Grazia, was pierced for twenty guns, but mounted only six, with four swivels.

After this successful enterprise, the Mutine was ordered to refit at Mahon, having suffered much from tempestuous weather, and the active service she had constantly been engaged in.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Mutine, Port Mahon, April 10th, 1799.

MY DEAR FATHER,

You know my destination after leaving Cadiz was to join Lord Nelson at Naples. On my arrival there September 12th, I was ordered to cruise off Malta, in company with him and his squadron; but a few days after, having letters to send to the English minister at Constanti-

nople, I was despatched October 2nd, to Smyrna, and to forward the despatches to Mr. Smith by land. I had heard so much about Smyrna and the neighbouring coast, about plague and different diseases which prevail in that part of Asia, that I cannot say I enjoyed much the idea of going there; but I found it quite a different place to what I had supposed, and before I had been there a week, I changed my opinion entirely.

Our reception on our arrival, November 5th, was very flattering. On coming to an anchor, every ship in the bay saluted us, which of course was returned. There had not been an English man-of-war there for a length of time, nor did they expect one, so that our arrival was quite an agreeable surprise.

The town of Smyrna is divided into two parts; the Turks inhabiting one part, and the Christians the other: the latter chiefly consist of merchants of different nations, and part of their families who have married Greeks, but still call themselves Christians. They were remarkably friendly and civil during my stay there, and improve greatly upon acquaintance with them.

From what I could judge of the Turks, I thought them a lazy, ignorant people, seemingly careless about every thing in this world, and nearly as much about the next, I believe. Their time is chiefly spent in smoking tobacco and drinking coffee, the latter of which they are immoderately fond of. They detest the Christians, whom they style dogs; but since our victory at the Nile, they have altered their tone, and pay the English a little more respect than formerly. They would hardly credit that Buonaparte had landed in Egypt, and even when assured of it, seemed averse to the war. Although brave, they are naturally lazy, and as long as a Turk can lie upon his couch, and smoke his pipe, and eat opium, it matters little whether his neighbours are friends or enemies.

During my stay, there was a fire in the town, and about one thousand or twelve hundred houses burnt down. The plague raged there, but not in the extreme; about eight or nine died each day, which is reckoned nothing in comparison to the many hundreds, I believe, that are daily carried off by this infectious disease in the summer.

After lying five weeks in Smyrna Bay, the

courier arrived with the despatches for Lord Nelson, in answer to those I brought. I weighed immediately, and after a very unpleasant passage, having a great deal of blowing tempestuous weather, joined the admiral at Palermo, January 3rd.

When I left him off Malta, our affairs in Italy were going on as well as possible. In the month of April, the King of Naples had brought into the field an army of 50,000 men, reckoned as fine a body of troops as ever were seen, with the intention of acting against the French, and reinstating the Pope in his dominions. The command was given to General Mack, an officer of known courage and experience; and the most sanguine expectations were formed, not only from the knowledge of the General, and the army he had with him, but also because the French at that time had not a force nearly adequate to oppose them. But the division and defeat of one part of their army broke all their measures; and the treachery of the officers, who had been privately bribed by the French, and the bad state of the troops, being in want of clothing and provisions of every kind, occasioned a general discontent throughout the army.

In this situation, the French came up with them, and the Neapolitan troops, discouraged by their late defeat, and the neglect with which they thought they had been treated, refused to fight in their country's defence, and laid down their arms to a man.

The news of this disastrous event soon reached the court of Naples, and spread universal consternation. This French army was still marching forward, and the jacobins in the city began to be very troublesome, and offered some insult to the royal family. In this situation it was thought advisable for the King, and all his court, to embark on board the English ships that were lying in the bay; and on the 22nd of December they went on board the Vanguard, Admiral Nelson's ship, and arrived safe in Palermo. The French troops entered Naples the latter end of January.

I remained cruising in the bay some time, but the weather has been so bad, that it has made the Mutine quite leaky; so much so, that Lord Nelson ordered me to Mahon to refit, where I now am. I have been out one cruise with the Centaur and Cormorant, but taken nothing. I

am in hopes in the next we shall be more fortunate. With love to all at Godwick.

TO THE SAME.

Mutine, Leghorn Roads, October 24th, 1799.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I am just arrived in Leghorn Roads, driven in through distress of weather from a cruise off the coast, and towed in a French privateer which I captured yesterday, after a chase of three hours.

You must of course be acquainted with the active part the English have taken in restoring the King of Naples to his dominions, and in driving the French out of Italy. I am happy to say the Mutine was employed in that service from the beginning to the end of it; and although no pecuniary advantage resulted from it, yet the professional knowledge which any person might obtain, made ample compensation. Soon after Naples was in possession of the King's troops, a squadron under the command of Commodore Trowbridge was ordered to blockade Civita Vecchia, the principal sea-port in the

late Pope's dominions, and of which the French had possession.

On our arrival off there, the commodore summoned the place to surrender, when, contrary to our expectations, the governor not only entered into treaty for the town which he commanded, but also for Rome itself, in which place they had a garrison of four thousand men. The necessary articles of treaty were quickly drawn up, which were certainly favourable for those rascals; and on the 28th of September, the English marines, with a party of seamen belonging to the squadron, were landed, and took possession of the forts of Civita Vecchia, while the Neapolitan troops, on the part of the English, at the same time marched into Rome.

Thus was the whole Roman state, with its capital, once mistress of the world, taken by about three hundred Englishmen. How much times are altered since Julius Cæsar landed in Britain, and how much have the Romans degenerated from their ancestors!

The French troops, agreeably to the capitulation, were to be embarked in Neapolitan ves-

sels for France, with the privileges of keeping their arms and not to be considered prisoners of war. They of course marched out of the castle with drums beating, colours flying, and all the honours of war allowed them.

On the 11th of October the commodore sailed for Palermo, and left me to superintend the embarkation of the garrisons, with another sloop of war, which was placed under my command. From the frequent cruelty and continual plunder of the French on the inhabitants of the Roman state, they had made the latter (and very justly, I must confess) their most inveterate enemies; and the greatest hatred and desire of revenge prevailed among the lower class of people. On the commodore's leaving the place, and only such a few English troops (which were a mere party of marines from the Mutine) remaining in the castle, the inhabitants have conceived an idea, from our supposed weakness, that, should the French attempt to attack us, we were not strong enough to withstand them. With this idea, and the desire of revenge for former injuries, they had formed a plan of murdering the French troops which had arrived from Rome,

and were to be embarked the next day for France.

On the 12th we both dined on shore, and soon after dinner were alarmed by the firing of musquetry, and the report that the inhabitants had risen in the town with the intention of putting their design in execution. We instantly left the room, and ran to the place where the mob were assembled. If you have ever been at the quelling of a riot in England, you may imagine a little the confusion and discord that prevailed, but with us it was far worse. We were strangers to the language, and were afraid of bringing the military from the castle, as in that case it would have been left defenceless, and as it was the only place we could retire to in case of necessity. Thus situated, every thing depended on a moment: the mob had possession of two field-pieces, loaded with grape, they had surrounded the French general's house, and in another instant would have stormed it. I will now call your particular attention, to convince you what idea the people of this country entertain of an Englishman. The Neapolitans had three hundred troops in the town, but from neglect of

duty, and the want of confidence in them, on the part of the mob, they were not able to quell the riot, and believe me, only made things worse. The troops had not courage to charge the mob, and the mob paid not the smallest attention to the troops. We were only three Englishmen, and on our appearance they applied to us to lead them against the French; but as our intentions were far otherwise, we, partly by menaces and partly by persuasion, got the two pieces of cannon, and kept them tolerably quiet. We now thought we had gained our chief point, but the town as yet was far from being in a state of tranquillity. The French sent us word that if they did not immediately see their general, they should attack the town. Their force, which was three or four hundred men, was fully adequate for their purpose; and though it was contrary to every article of the treaty, we well knew that a Frenchman's word of honour was of no avail when compared to the advantage that might be gained from a superiority of force. In this situation we waited on the French general, and acquainted him with the intention of his troops, and the state of the mob; that it would be dangerous to walk through

the streets without a guard, we well knew, and therefore offered our services to escort him to the French barracks, which he accepted, and we marched through the midst of the mob with him, arm-in-arm, until we arrived at the troops. I confess I expected a ball of some kind or another through me, but luckily we arrived safe. He then harangued them, and desired all to repair to the barracks, which was immediately complied with; and the other party, finding nothing was to be done, retired quietly to their respective homes. Thus finished quietly an evening, which in the beginning had so contrary an appearance; and I assure you, during the whole course of service I have been in, I have never suffered more anxiety than in this business. Six hundred Swiss, in the Neapolitan service, arrived in time, and restored perfect tranquillity. The French troops then embarked, and we sailed immediately, the general on board the Mutine, and conveyed him as far as Bastia, from whence he sailed in a Neapolitan vessel for France. This was the first service of the kind I ever was employed upon, and most sincerely do I hope it will be the last. I am now cruising off Leghorn, but hope soon

to leave a station which I detest, and the inhabitants of a country which I despise.

When I consider myself in a country which was once formidable in war, and spread terror over the whole world, I can hardly account for the present wretchedness and pusillanimity of its inhabitants, a prey to every invader, and their princes (if they deserve the name) seeking redress not by vigour but by complaints. The men seem directed by low, sordid interest alone, and all their thoughts are centred in themselves. Many of them are bigoted to the French principles of liberty and equality; but how miserably have they been deceived! An Englishman's idea of liberty is never so strong as when he is presented with such prospects as these; and I must confess that in all the hurry and confusion of war, one of my comforts is, that I am of that happy country.

Pray remember me most kindly to my dear mother, sister, and in short all hands; and if they did but know how anxiously I wish to hear from them, I am sure they would write. Lord Nelson behaves like a second father: how can I return him the many obligations I am under?

I hope you will excuse the length of this letter, but the latter part has carried me farther than I expected, though really nothing but the truth. With best love to all at Godwick.

TO MRS. HOSTE.

At sea, November 3rd, 1799, La Mutine.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

I mentioned in my last, my intention of writing to you ere long. I now sit down with pleasure to perform my promise, though I am afraid the little information we obtain at sea will scarcely make amends for your trouble in reading it. Excuse me if I again begin upon the old story, your long, long silence; to me it appears an age, and believe me, one line from the old hall would make me the happiest man alive. Seven years' absence have made no alteration—I mean with respect to my affectionate regard for all.

I recollect with pleasure, sometimes mixed with regret, the many happy days I have spent in Norfolk. Often and often I think of the tender and affectionate care you have taken of us all, and I am not ashamed to say, the recollection has frequently cost me tears. The idea strikes me now

often more forcibly than ever. When in large ships, with so many companions, my thoughts were more employed, though, believe me, I never forgot you. At present, the case is altered; I am in a brig by myself, and having more time, and less hurry and bustle than formerly, my ideas consequently turn to that spot and to those objects which are so dear to every one when placed in similar situations. I picture to myself the happiness that awaits me on my return to England; I fancy I see my father, and you, and all the family round the fireside in the parlour: indeed, I think when I see it in reality, the old house will hardly hold me.

To meet you again all in health and happiness, is my daily prayer; and I hope that period is not far distant. Everything bids fair; our affairs on the Continent, and indeed in every part of the world, prosper; and by all accounts the present state of France, which is certainly very bad, must shortly oblige her to finish a contest which she is little able to support. Her conquests and victories have certainly been great, I mean with the army; but when we consider the numberless deceits and treacheries

that have been practised, our wonder will cease, and we shall be only astonished why a greater part had not fallen under her tyrannical government.

Italy, and I believe Switzerland, will long feel the fatal effects of French liberty. Led on by maxims so contrary to their real interest, the Italians imagined on their recovering the French, their troubles and discontents among themselves would entirely cease. Possessed with this idea, and with republican principles planted in them by their emissaries, they delivered their lives and property to the welfare of the French Republic; but how miserably were they deceived! In every city, town, or village, through which the French army passed, contributions the most heavy were laid on the inhabitants; and not only the private property was given up, but even the gold and silver from the different churches, the antique statues, and antiquities which had remained there for ages past, were delivered up to the insatiable avarice of a few individuals. Such were the people the Italians supposed would be their deliverers, but in the end proved their greatest oppressors.

I believe I mentioned in my last, that the French general and suite took a passage in the brig from Civita Vecchia to Bastia, after the surrender of the former place. During the passage, in conversation with many of the French officers, who unavoidably were obliged to live with me, they freely declared their opinions of the present state of France, and did not hesitate in saying, that the next campaign, if unfortunate, would prove the last; so exhausted were their finances, and so dissatisfied were the people with the present government, that, unless considerable changes took place at the helm, they would shortly be obliged to make peace on any terms. They styled the Directory an ambitious set of men, who wantonly sacrificed the lives of thousands to their private interest and ambition. I must own, I was astonished to hear people, who in general are so distrustful of each other, give their opinion so freely.

On our arrival at Bastia, I sent in a flag of truce with the general, and on his return, he informed me, that Buonaparte had arrived in Corsica from Egypt with three or four of his

officers; that the army of Egypt, which was reduced to one thousand men, was at Grand Cairo; and we have since heard they are in a most wretched condition. How the Directory will approve of the conqueror of Italy leaving his army, still remains a doubt; but it is reported, that finding things go so hard with them, they had sent orders for him to return immediately to France, and, we understood, he is instantly to take the command of what they still call the Army of Italy.

He has my sincere wishes, that his actions hereafter in Italy may coincide with his *former splendid victories in Egypt.* It is certain that his arrival in France may raise the spirits of the people greatly, but it is the general opinion in this part of the world, that the present state of France is so dreadfully bad, that it is not in the man's power alone to restore it to the flourishing condition it held a few days ago.

I do not attempt, neither do I wish, to give my opinion of Buonaparte; but by all accounts he is a man of great abilities, and it certainly is a pity they are not employed in a better cause.

General Berthier, who was with him in Egypt, has also arrived; the idea the French have of him is not less than of Buonaparte.

A French officer the other day told me in the high style of a Frenchman, that Berthier in the cabinet, and Buonaparte in the field, were invincible when acting together. As I am never forward in giving my opinion, especially when I have reason to believe it will not be acceptable; so when obliged to give it, I always hold it for a maxim to speak my real sentiments. I therefore told him that what he said might be true, but that certainly their affairs in Egypt had not exactly proved his assertion, whatever was the courage or the conduct of the two generals. I believe he was very well satisfied with the truth of what I said, as he did not attempt to make an answer.

I think, my dear mother, your patience must be almost tired with my long rigmarole about these Frenchmen, therefore I will have done, as I believe the less that is said of them the better. I do not think I mentioned in my last, that I have been ordered to Cagliari, in order to take the King's brother over to the Continent. On

the 1st of August I arrived there, and having delivered my despatches in person to his Majesty, he told me his brother, with his family, would take a passage in the brig to Leghorn. On the 14th we sailed, and after a pleasant voyage of four days, I landed them all safe in Tuscany.

The attention I received from the Duke de Aosta and his amiable wife, during the passage, will always make me respect them. On her leaving the brig, the latter made me a present of a very handsome diamond ring.

I hope my father has had plenty of sport this season. We sometimes have a day's sport at Leghorn, but very seldom.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Mutine, at sea, Jan. 10th, 1800.

MY DEAR FATHER,

Since my last of November, I have been ordered to Port Mahon to refit. After having lain there near five weeks, they gave me a complete fill out of every thing, though no thanks to them. I had, previous to my arrival there, got a letter from Lord Nelson to the officer of the dock-yard; and from that they were obliged

to supply me with every thing I stood in need of. I am now on my passage with a convoy from Mahon, bound to Leghorn, and shall take the opportunity of sending this by the post, which is by far the safest and quickest mode of conveyance. I take the liberty of recommending it.

My stay at Leghorn will be very short; after seeing the convoy in, I am ordered to cruise off Genoa with the Penelope frigate, for the purpose of blockading that port. As we have every reason to suppose it will fall shortly, I think there is a probability of obtaining some money, as the Genoese will certainly make an attempt to remove their riches, &c. before the entrance of the Austrians, which can only be effected by sea. The last campaign in Italy certainly reflects great credit on the allies.

In the beginning of the year, the French had possession of every fortified town in it, even to the southern promontory, Calabria. And now, I believe I may say, they have not a foot of it belonging to them. Their former success was chiefly owing to the treachery of the inhabitants, and not the invincible valour of the Republican heroes, who have gained far more by the

terror of their name and low artifices, than by courage. I am sorry to hear our expedition to Holland failed; the most sanguine hopes were entertained of it in this part of the world. However, it certainly did no harm.

We have to lament the loss of a number of brave men, without doubt, but surely the terror it occasioned throughout France, and the consequence resulting from it, make some amends. I think the attempt of reinstating the Stadtholder great and praiseworthy, and although unfortunately we failed, yet still the man who planned it deserves credit.

Lord Nelson is still at Palermo; his squadron, under Commodore Trowbridge, are blockading Malta, but by all accounts there is very little prospect of that falling. It is a wonderfully strong place, and although they have little provisions for the garrison, yet any little supply that gets in, (which at times it is impossible to prevent,) goes a great way; for, give a Frenchman half a pound of bread and a bunch of grapes a day, and he can live, although I won't say perfectly satisfied; but place John Bull in the same situation, and you will easily perceive the contrast.

Lord Nelson still continues as kind as ever; how greatly I am indebted to him! He has been good enough to promise me a post captain's commission, and had there been an opportunity of making me, he would have done so ere now. At any rate, I am young and willing, and if I do not get made post captain this war, most likely I shall the next. I, of all people, ought to be content, and I assure you I am both content and happy.

TO MRS. HOSTE.

Mutine, at Sea, Jan. 10th, 1800.

MY DEAR DEAR MOTHER,

A thousand thousand thanks for your kind and affectionate letter, which reached me on my arrival at Port Mahon last month. To find that you and all the family were well, made me completely happy, and indeed I was truly thankful. I beg you will not mention any thing about your letters being entertaining; you can form but a slight idea of the pleasure I receive in reading them; if it is only two lines from Godwick, it is enough. I am glad indeed in seeing your hand-writing, but confess, I should be equally as much pleased to see you in person,

at the old hall. How long it will be before that takes place, is very uncertain.

There is a report prevalent here, that a general armistice has taken place throughout the continent, and that the Spanish court intend to act as mediator for a general peace. I most heartily wish for it, but nevertheless, sooner than we should have a dishonourable peace, I would continue the war for ever, if possible. The French, by all accounts, are on their last legs, but that has been the case since the commencement of the war, therefore I put very little confidence in that rumour. I think both parties, by this time, must be heartily tired, and will soon give up a contest where there is so little prospect of success, or credit to be gained on either side.

I believe I did not mention the death of my much-lamented commander, Captain Miller, who was blown up in the Theseus, carrying shell from Jaffa to Jean d'Acre. Gifted with the manners and sentiments which so fully characterize the gentleman, he possessed also, in a very great degree, the abilities of a seaman; in him, I may truly say, the service lost a brave and experienced officer, and I, speaking for myself, a very sincere friend.

I have a famous cabin on board the Mutine, but am rather dull from want of society. Next to the duty of the ship, I employ my time chiefly in reading, though my library is so very small, that I begin to be almost tired of reading the same thing over again so many times. If you could send me a few books, to make some little addition, I really should be very thankful. Mr. and Mrs. Pollard, who paid me so much attention when I was on shore, ill, at Leghorn, have arrived there, from England. I called at their house when I was there last, and met with a very warm reception. I certainly am greatly indebted to them for their civility, and as it may lay in my power to do them some very small service, I mean with respect to agency for prizes, I shall not hesitate in doing it.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Mutine, at Sea, Jan. 22nd, 1800.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I believe in my last I mentioned being charged with a convoy bound to Leghorn, from Mahon. I arrived there the evening after, with the pleasing satisfaction of having seen them all

in safe, which is rather singular, there being so many privateers of the enemy cruising in these parts. Lord Keith, the commander-in-chief, came to an anchor at the same time; and the Penelope frigate having sailed for Gibraltar contrary to his expectation, I received orders to proceed off Genoa, and join Captain Louis of the Minotaur, who was stationed on the coast for the purpose of blockading that port.

I sailed on the 14th instant with that intention, and cruised several days without falling in with him, which, by the by, I was not sorry for, as any prize taken by the Mutine alone would of course be far better for the captors, and I was not without hopes of soon getting one; as, when in the Agamemnon, Lord Nelson had always been employed particularly on that coast, to co-operate with the Austrians, and from our long continuance there I was very well acquainted with it.

I was not altogether deceived in my conjecture; for on Sunday the 19th, we perceived two ships close in with the land, which of course were suspicious; we immediately gave chase, and about seven in the evening came alongside, and found them to be from Marseilles, bound to

Genoa, laden with corn and wine for the relief of the garrison, who, by all accounts, are in a dreadful state of starvation. The weather would not allow us to shift the prisoners till the next day, when we shaped our course for Leghorn, intending to see our prisoners safe into that port.

I yesterday fell in with the Minotaur, which I had been looking for so long; and although I am sure they were glad of our success, yet they were rather disappointed at not being in at the death. Captain Louis was good enough to allow me to see them safe in. I am now on my passage, with both of them in company. Their cargoes being wine and corn, will sell very well at Leghorn, and I think I shall make about £800 or £1000. I say this, my dear father, because I am vain enough to think that any thing for my welfare will not be disagreeable to my dear friends at Godwick. This, with what I have gained as prize-money since my commission as captain, besides my half-pay, will be thousands in peace-time.

You see sometimes I reckon for a rainy day, either for myself, or some other. I remitted to my agent, some few months back, £1000, and

I intend to do the same with this, when I get it. I hope my dear father will excuse me when I say the money is of no use to me, as my pay, with very little addition, serves me; and will take the trouble to put it to any purpose he thinks proper. I am afraid you will think me rather selfish, for certainly the contents of this letter are chiefly on my own dear interests.

We have very little news in this part of the world. The fall of Genoa is daily expected, and I think not without reason, for which I refer you to the former part of my letter. Of course you must be fully acquainted with the affairs of France, I mean with respect to Buonaparte, who, we understand, is declared First Consul, in conjunction with two others under him, who are also called consuls. I hope their constitution is altered for the better; though they have had so many former, I think there cannot be much dependence on this.

Lord Keith having taken the command of the Mediterranean fleet, it is strongly reported that Lord Nelson will take his departure for England. I sincerely hope not, but think it is very probable, as Lord Nelson will not serve as se-

cond in command. I hope the Holkham family are all well, to whom I beg my best respects,—also to Lord and Lady Townsend, for their kind intention of getting me forward.

TO MRS. HOSTE.

At sea, March 7th, 1800. La Mutine.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

I this day have boarded a vessel, which, on strict examination, our commodore has thought proper to detain, and I have just got my orders to convoy her to Leghorn. The squadron I am with consists of three frigates, one line-of-battle ship, and three sloops of war, under the command of Captain Louis. It is particularly stationed to blockade the port of Genoa and the neighbouring coast, which we have in a great measure effected. The Austrian troops are close upon Genoa, and directly the weather will admit of their acting, they are to open the campaign, and I have very little doubt of the capital of the Ligurian republic soon falling into their hands. By all accounts they are in a most miserable state: having very little provisions, and indeed scarce the necessaries of life.

We have a great idea that peace will soon take place. It was even reported that Buonaparte's brother is in England for the purpose of settling the preliminaries. Most sincerely do I hope it may prove true, and that I may have the happiness of seeing Old England once more. Every thing in this country, since the last campaign, is altered for the better. Commerce is as flourishing as ever in every part of Italy; and were it not for the formidable army the Austrians have in these parts, every article would be cheap. You must of course have read in the papers the arrival of Lord Keith in the Mediterranean, to take the chief command of the squadron stationed there.

I anchored in Leghorn last January, and found both his lordship and my ever-respected friend and patron, Lord Nelson, lying there. As the latter was previously commander in chief, Lord Keith's arrival was rather unfortunate for me, as I am an utter stranger to him or any of his acquaintance. I dined with Lord Nelson on board the Foudroyant; he told me he had strongly recommended me to the commander in chief, and that he had promised to make me a post captain.

I leave you, my dear mother, to guess how greatly I was affected by his kindness, for indeed words will fall infinitely short of what I wish to express. It is exactly seven years since I left Godwick, and believe me, during the whole time he never has altered his conduct with respect to me. I think every time I see him, he behaves with more kindness than ever. I beg, if you correspond with Lord Nelson, you will be good enough to make my best respects. I have seen Sir E. Berry, who is at present Lord Nelson's captain; he was very well.

I hope my father has had good sport this season; in all probability, I shall be at home next Christmas, to have my share of the amusements which Godwick continually affords.

TO DIXON HOSTE, ESQ.

Mutine at sea, March 8th, 1800.

MY DEAR DIXON,

I forgot to mention, in my letter to my mother, the late success of Lord Nelson. You of course knew that, in his action off the Nile, only two of the line escaped, one to Malta, and the other to Toulon. I am happy to say, he fell in

with the Genereux the other day off Malta, and after firing two guns at her, she struck her colours to the Foudroyant; a store ship fell with her, and three corvettes got clear. The above squadron had sailed from Toulon, laden with provisions for the garrison of Malta, and had nearly been successful. There is only one line-of-battle ship left of the whole fleet which sailed from Toulon in May 1798.

I beg you will tell Kate to write the first opportunity, and give me a long account of her adventures, my dear Dixon, and with best love to all.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Mutine, off Genoa, June 22nd, 1800.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I am sorry to say our affairs in this part of the world wear rather an unfavourable appearance; indeed, they are strangely altered within the last fortnight.

The success of the Austrians, in the opening of this campaign, was very great, both in Piedmont and in the Genoese territory, having possession of the coast from the capital to Nice, excepting Villa Franca. Genoa surrendered to

the allies on the 4th instant, through want of provisions, and everything seemed to promise a speedy restoration to the King of Sardinia of his dominions in Savoy: but how greatly has a week changed these sanguine hopes, which were entertained by people of every description.

General Berthier's rapid march into the Milanese, obliged the Austrians to evacuate the whole coast from Nice to Genoa, to reinforce General Melas, who was acting against the enemy in Lombardy. The force which had been blockading Genoa, was ordered for the same purpose, and this reinforcement increased the allied army to forty or fifty thousand men. The French, I believe, had nearly the same number, but commanded by an experienced General, whose name was thought equivalent to armies. I am not able to inform you when the decisive business took place, but it seems, a few days ago a very severe battle was fought near Alessandria, which terminated in favour of the French, and turned the scale of affairs completely. By all accounts, the Austrians were entirely defeated, and the victory on the part of the French was complete.

They have obliged General Melas to come to terms which indeed nothing but the greatest necessity can justify, and which the government is ashamed to mention. They are to give up all their possessions in Piedmont and Savoy; and what more will be the consequences of this victory, we are yet to learn. I know not what is to stop them, but peace. The Austrians have behaved most shamefully, and the battle of Alessandria will remain an eternal stigma on their national character as soldiers.

The French soldiers, whom the Austrians styled conscripts and boys, have by this time, I dare say, convinced the Austrians that they are equally as much their superiors in the field as Buonaparte is their superior in politics and as a statesman. Lord Keith, I believe, was not consulted, although him they may thank for the fall of Genoa; and as he has always been acting with them, it certainly would have been proper to have asked his opinion. I am at present off Genoa, to acquaint any vessels which may be bound there, of its restoration to the enemy.

Lord Nelson is at present at Leghorn, and

will sail, I believe, shortly for England. I hope I shall see him before he sails, as I think the sooner I am in England the better, Lord St. Vincent having the command of the Channel fleet, and my very worthy patron going home. With best love to all at Godwick.

During the time that Captain Hoste was employed in the blockade of Genoa, his activity in such attacks on the coast as were possible, in preventing the arrivals of supplies to the enemy, in distressing their trade, as well as protecting that of his own country and her allies, was indefatigable. In the nine first months, nine vessels were taken at sea, under a smart fire from the shore at each separate attack; twelve more were cut out from under the land. In the month of May, the boats of the Mutine were sent on shore at Villa Franca, to destroy the guns on that battery, which was successfully executed, and nine carriages were burnt.

LORD NELSON TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Dover Street, Nov. 18th, 1800.

MY DEAR SIR,

Many thanks for your kind letter; your son deserved more than I could give him. He ought to have been Post, and would long since, had I retained the command. He will do me and all credit in whatever situation he is placed. Excuse this short line, and with best compliments to Mrs. Hoste, believe me, your obedient servant,

(Copy.) NELSON AND BRONTE.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

La Mutine, Naples Bay, March 18th, 1801.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I am this instant arrived off Naples, and learn with astonishment that the port is shut against the English. The boatman has promised to deliver this in safe hands, either to the Consul, or some English merchant, who may, perhaps, forward it to England. At any rate, it is worth trying, and should it never reach you, it will be of no consequence. All the

English merchants almost are obliged to leave the city, therefore my hopes are not very sanguine. I am sure you have been expecting letters from Mutine some time, but the late unfortunate defeats in Italy have precluded every possibility of sending letters to England by Leghorn, or, indeed, any other way, excepting by sea. However, if you have been unfortunate with respect to my letters, yours have had the same fate with regard to me.

What an age since I heard from Godwick and its dear inhabitants! Most fervently do I hope they are all well; a letter from them would be the greatest blessing that could happen to me. I am sure it is not any neglect, but believe me, I ascribe it to the right cause, the want of opportunity.

I am ordered here with despatches for Sir John Warren; my stay will be very short, not finding him here. Not a word about politics, my dear father, as it is very doubtful whether this will ever reach you, and should it have that luck, I am fearful you will not be able to read so dreadful a scrawl.

TO THE SAME.

Mahon, Mutine, April 6th, 1801.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I am this instant arrived at this place from Naples, where I wrote to you, and have since been chased by the French squadron, and now bring the first intelligence to the senior officer at Mahon, who has ordered me to repair to Egypt, to the Commander-in-chief, which is important in the extreme. The Mutine has not anchored, and I have come in here in my small boat, therefore you may guess my hurry. I think you will say I am always in a hurry; but, indeed, Captain Dixon is now telling me I must have done, as the service will not admit my staying a moment longer.

Do not fear for Mutine, she will weather it all, and bring you home your son in health; and I am sure if you are happy, I cannot help being so, for I never was better in my life, nor more disposed to lend a hand to beat those Frenchmen, who, I am happy to see, are now out cruising. Probably from the French squa-

dron chasing Mutine, you may hear she is captured, but this will convince you to the contrary.

TO THE SAME.

La Mutine, Aboukir Bay, May 1st, 1801.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I wrote to you by the Flora, informing you I was destined for Egypt, and I am happy to say I arrived safe in the old Mutine, although after a very tedious passage, having had constant foul winds since my departure from Malta. I found Lord Keith, who had been joined by the squadron under Sir J. B. Warren, cruising off Alexandria, and gave him the information of the French squadron's returning to Toulon, without having performed the object of their cruise, which was very satisfactory to his lordship. I immediately received his orders to proceed to the memorable bay of Aboukir, to water and refit, &c.

You may be sure the sight of Aboukir recalled to my memory the ever-glorious battle of the Nile, and the recollection of a man who (one alone excepted) is the dearest to me on

earth; and should I not be the most ungrateful wretch alive, did I not acknowledge that to Lord Nelson I am indebted for my present rank in the service? Grateful, I am sure, I shall always be, but it is not in the power of words to convey to you what I feel when I think of that most exalted character.

On his leaving the Mediterranean station, and his command also, which he had fulfilled with so much honour to himself and credit to his country, he recommended me to the Commander-in-chief, Lord Keith; and although his lordship has not promoted me, yet he has always treated me with uncommon attention, and which must be owing to Lord Nelson, as I never saw him till his arrival in these seas.

I confess to you, that your letter of the 30th of November, wherein Lord Nelson mentioned me, gave me the most heartfelt delight. To find that my conduct gives you satisfaction, is alone sufficient to make me happy; and, indeed, it is no small addition to find how high I am held in the esteem of those who are highest in my own profession.

I am afraid I can give you no hopes of the

Mutine's being soon in England; she certainly is getting very weak, but I would not take a step of that sort (I mean giving in her defects) without her being much worse than she is at present. I wish you would speak to Lord Nelson on the subject, and hear what he says. I once nearly lost his favour by representing the brig in a bad state, which will be sufficient warning to me how I do it again.

We have heard of the change in the Administration, and now Lord St. Vincent is first in the Admiralty, I am in great hopes you will contrive to shift my epaulette, as, believe me, the left shoulder is tired of wearing it so long, and I should think your interest must now be pretty strong. At any rate, I should like to know what Lord Nelson thinks of it, but I am prevented writing to him, for fear he should suppose that I am not satisfied with what he has done for me, than which nothing can be more contrary to the truth, and I would not for the world he should think so; next to the dear old Godwick, a line from him would be pleasing indeed.

I have served under Sir T. Trowbridge for

some time, and also Captain Markham, both of whom are at present Lords of the Admiralty, and I do not think quite forget the Mutine cruising with them.

I shall write to my dear mother by this opportunity, who, I hope, will not take it ill in not hearing from me before. How glad I am to hear that Dixon is getting on so rapidly, and that all the young ones are well.

Believe me to remain, my dear father, &c.

TO MRS. HOSTE.

La Mutine, Egypt, May 1st, 1801.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

Accept a thousand thanks for your kind and affectionate letter dated in November, which of all places in the world reached me in Egypt, and gave me real pleasure on hearing you and the family were all in health and happiness. Your long expected letter, which was sent out by Sir Edward Berry, reached me at the same time, and I am at a loss to conceive by what accident I have been prevented getting it so long.

I am happy to find you have received mine

dated in September last. I was fearful it would not reach you, as the French took possession of Tuscany soon after my writing it, and, of course, stopped all communication with England. Who could suppose that the campaign which commenced so brilliantly, would have finished in so infamous a manner? Never, I think, were troops more completely cut up than in the last year; and 1800 has closed a century, which has teemed with events the most extraordinary and interesting.

Buonaparte carries the day, and has established his character on the firm basis of popular applause. However their rapid and successful victories in Germany may tend to keep him in power, yet he has suffered a complete defeat in Egypt, and I think is on the point of seeing what has always been his darling object, torn from him, I hope for ever. His ancient army of Italy, which gained him so many laurels and such great reputation, is now no more. Seven or eight thousand, at most, are the shattered remains of his force in Egypt; and they are pent up in Alexandria, with no other resource than their own courage and constancy. Relief from France

they can hardly expect with any degree of probability; and sickness and famine must shortly compel them to relinquish any further attempt of forming a colony in these parts, at least for some time. This is what the knowing ones say; and as I hate all croakers, I join in the general opinion, and most fervently wish things may turn out as well as are expected.

The army from India has landed at Suez, and is marching to join General Hutchinson before Alexandria. The landing of our troops in Aboukir was, by all accounts, the most gallant affair they have been engaged in, and we must allow it has given them a laurel which they much wanted. I was sorry I did not arrive in time to assist at the landing, as it might have been the means of getting promotion,—at any rate experience. So much for affairs in this part of the world.

I hear Lord Nelson has a command in the North Sea: if I am not mistaken, he will find the climate too cold for him. How fortunate I should be were he again to take the command in the Mediterranean; and I do not think it improbable. Be sure to make my best respects to

Lord Nelson, and his amiable consort, and, indeed, to every body that thinks it worth while to ask after me. Remember me most friendly to my uncle and aunt Hoste, and to all at Godwick; and believe me to be, my dear mother, with unabated affection, your dutiful son,

W. HOSTE.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

La Mutine, Trieste, May 26th, 1801.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I believe in my last I informed you of my arrival in Egypt, and subsequent return to Lord Keith, after having victualled at Aboukir. The evening I joined I received his orders to cruise in the Adriatic, under the command of Captain Rogers, of his Majesty's ship Mercury, who had sailed for those seas some time before. I fell in with him off the west of Candia, but parted in chase the next day. Where he is now, is uncertain; but wanting water and provisions of every kind, I have been obliged to put into Trieste, where I arrived the 25th, and am sorry to add, there is no prospect of leaving it soon, as I shall

be obliged to wait for a convoy of ships with troops, and see them safe into Malta.

You may conceive the happiness I felt on hearing of Lord Nelson's gallant affair at Copenhagen. Was there ever such a man in our navy before, or can you imagine there ever will be one to equal him? For my own part I think it impossible. O that we had him in the Mediterranean! Gantheaume would not cut so many capers in this part as he has done, and, indeed, is likely to do again. Fifteen sail blocking up Alexandria, where there are three French frigates. Toulon, with seven sail of the line in port, blocked up by three English frigates. We fear for Minorca. What is to hinder the squadron from Toulon going anywhere they please, except Egypt? Certainly Egypt is a great concern, but would not seven or eight sail of the line and a few frigates blockade Alexandria as well as seven thousand? and we then might have a formidable squadron to watch the motions of that in Toulon. I am not singular, and it has become the general topic. We have a very fine fleet in the Mediterranean, but it wants a head.

I wish to get home very much, if there are no signs of Lord Nelson's coming out to this country, particularly as I understand they have given him the chief command in the Baltic, and he certainly deserves every encouragement and praise that a grateful country can bestow. I think I see him making use of the expression, "I am Lord Nelson; look at my fin," and exposing his stump to the Danish officer.

I see by the papers Lord St. Vincent still remains at the head of the Admiralty with Sir T. Trowbridge. The victory at Copenhagen will probably conciliate the northern powers, and we all here shortly expect a general peace. I think by this time the business in Egypt must be settled, which will remove a great obstacle to that great object. I believe all hands are fully tired of fighting; the Danes have, at least, reason to be so.

Pray tell my dear mother, that I will write to her before I leave Trieste, and to Dixon also. I hope all the dear family are well and happy. I long anxiously to hear from Godwick. Should you see Lord Nelson, pray make my best respects, and tell him I dined with Captain Black-

wood, of the Penelope, the other day, who desired me, when I wrote, to remember him to Lord Nelson.

I am the oldest commander on the station, and am likely to continue so, under the present Commander-in-chief. Indeed, I anxiously long to see England for more reasons than one. I begin to get heartily tired of the Mediterranean. Pray inquire if Bolton, who went out in the Agamemnon with Lord Nelson, is safe, as I have a great regard for him. I must now conclude, with best love to all at Godwick.

TO DIXON HOSTE, ESQ.

Mutine, Trieste Mole, May 31st, 1801.

MY DEAR DIXON,

As I am not studying for my degree at Cambridge, I think my time cannot be better employed than in writing to a brother, whom, I must own, I have some little regard for; and although probably you will not find this scrawl quite so amusing as your beloved Euclid, yet be good enough to take the will for the deed. Without further preamble, allow me to wish you joy of the favourable appearance of your future

prospects in this sublunary world. You certainly have fagged very hard, and I most sincerely hope you have not done so for nothing.

I think they did very right to send me to sea, for I am such a stupid fellow, I should have done for nothing else. I do not know how it is, but I had always a mortal antipathy to the grammar and dictionary.

You, of course, long before this, have heard of the death of the gallant Abercromby. I am afraid his loss is greatly felt in Egypt, as he was so clever a man in his profession, and possessed the entire confidence of the army he commanded. He died, however, as every general ought to do, at the head of his troops, and in the arms of victory; and, however one may lament his fall, it was a glorious death for him, and in a good cause. There is a report here that Alexandria has capitulated, and that the remainder of the French troops have surrendered on certain conditions. The intelligence comes from a correspondent at Smyrna, dated the 17th of May; but it wants confirmation, and one can hardly imagine they have so soon finished the business. The gallant victory of

Copenhagen has (I find by the papers) brought the northern powers to reason, and I suppose by this time the whole is amicably settled.

What does not the nation owe to Lord Nelson for his intrepid conduct? In my opinion, it cannot do too much for him. We hear he is coming to take the command of the Mediterranean squadron; I wish most heartily he may. Admiral Gantheaume has again sailed from Toulon: where his destination is, is uncertain; some say for Sicily, others for Egypt. I am rather inclined to suppose the former place, as there is nothing to hinder his taking it whenever he thinks proper, and the advantage it will prove to them needs no comment. I think they have relinquished the idea of assisting Egypt, as it is certainly impracticable while Lord Keith remains there with so strong a squadron.

We have a very excellent opera at Trieste. I was there last night for the first time, and was highly delighted with the dancing, &c. The famous dancer Del Caro is here also. The piece is called "Hannibal." The house is reckoned the first in this part of the world, and the dresses and scenery beautiful.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

La Mutine, Trieste Mole, July 9th, 1801.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I am this moment arrived in Trieste, and sail again instantly for a cruise to the north and westward,—I believe off Ancona. You will doubtless see in the papers the account of my destroying the Neapolitan man-of-war brig. I am uncertain whether it will be good or bad for me, as in those matters it is entirely political, and depends how matters will turn out.

My last cruise has been pretty fortunate, although we had plenty of fighting; I mean in the small way, which is the worst, in my opinion. I am to join, on my leaving Trieste, Captain Rogers, of the Mercury, and we shall compose a squadron of two frigates and two brigs.

At Ancona the French have three frigates and a sloop of war, and we this day heard they are completely manned and ready for sea; so expect in my next an account of our having given them a most complete drubbing.

We hear nothing from Egypt, excepting that

Grand Cairo is taken, and the daily expectation of Alexandria sharing the same fate.

I wrote to Lord Nelson in May, congratulating him on his victory at Copenhagen, which he so gallantly obtained. Most sincerely do I rejoice that the affairs with the northern powers are settled, and which I believe to be ascribed to the battle of the 2nd of April.

I hope, my dear father, you will excuse the badness of this scrawl, as I am alone and hurried about duty, being in want of every kind of provision, &c.

Remember me most kindly to my dear mother and all the family, and my best respects to Lord Nelson, when you write to or see him.

The services of the Mutine, ever since she refitted at Trieste, had been one continued series of activity and enterprise. The young commander was well entitled to shift his epaulette (as he humorously expresses it) from one shoulder to the other; but too little is known at home of the real merits of officers abroad. Besides the destruction of the Neapolitan brig,

which is mentioned in the preceding letter, he had captured in the last four months no less than twelve vessels.

Upon the proclamation of peace, the Rev. Dixon Hoste expressed his anxiety to Lord Nelson for the promotion of his son: the answer he received, is, perhaps, more gratifying than any reward which government could bestow. The approbation of such a man is worth the applause of millions.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

November 21st, 1801.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your dear son William has not had justice done him; if I was either Commander-in-chief in the Mediterranean, or First Lord of the Admiralty, he should be Post this day, for no man in the Mediterranean has half deserved it so much as he does. Get Lord Cholmondeley to ask Lord St. Vincent's for him, as everybody loves William. If I had interest, I would be truly happy to employ it on such a good occasion. Sir William and Lady Hamilton join with

me in every good wish to yourself and family, and believe me, dear Sir, your much obliged,

NELSON AND BRONTE.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Malta, Sept. 22nd, 1801.

MY DEAR FATHER,

The Camel frigate has this instant arrived with the account of Alexandria having fallen on the 28th; she sails immediately for England with the duplicates from the Commander-in-chief, therefore I must be short. Our army has not suffered, as the place capitulated. Sir Sydney Smith goes home in the Camel, and he is now getting under weigh, therefore I must conclude.

TO THE SAME.

Mutine, Oct. 21st. 1801. Malta.

MY DEAR FATHER,

The Pique frigate sails immediately for England, and I cannot allow her to sail without giving the dear inhabitants of old Godwick a line. News yesterday arrived of peace being at last concluded with France; you may better

conceive than I describe the different emotions felt by every person on so important intelligence. Soon I hope to see Old England again; and the bare idea almost drives me wild, on calling to mind the heartfelt satisfaction I shall have on seeing my dear father and mother, &c. all well and happy. That time surely is not far distant. I know not whether I shall arrive a post-captain, but think I stand a good chance.

I have written to Lord Nelson on the subject of promotion, and I am sure you will strive all you can. I have received orders to take my station off Otranto in the Adriatic, for a fortnight, and I hope, on my return, I shall be ordered to England.

TO THE SAME.

Syracuse, Dec. 29th, 1801.

MY DEAR FATHER,

Captain Chamberlayne, whom I believe you remember to have seen at Swaffham, will deliver this, as he is on his return to England after his services in Egypt, which have hurt him in health a good deal. From him I have heard more of the dear family at Godwick than from any other person since my leaving England;

and you may conceive what pleasure it gave me to hear him mention you, and all the family, with great regard. I am under great obligations to him for a little advice he gave me this day about money matters.

I am just arrived here from Malta, with the packages of ploughs, harrows, and garden stuff of different descriptions for my ever-respected patron Lord Nelson, for his estate at Bronté, which I applied to the Commander-in-chief to bring over to this place, and which, after a deal of consideration, he granted. You may suppose the commission of doing the smallest service to a man whom I am under such obligations to, was most gratifying, and, indeed, I felt the greatest pleasure in executing it. I understand he is to be out here in the spring.

If you have ever received my letter from Trieste, mentioning the Mutine destroying a Neapolitan man-of-war brig, you will recollect that I then said it would remain a doubt, whether I acted properly or not. On Lord Keith's arrival at Malta, he was greatly displeased with what I had done, as he thought I had exceeded the tenour of his orders respecting

Neapolitan vessels of every description. I am happy to say, that the defence I drew up on that occasion, not only satisfied him, but the oldest captain in the fleet said publicly, I had done nothing more than my duty, and even went so far as to say, he thought if I had acted otherwise, I should have deserved to be broke. The defence was sent home by Lord Keith to Earl St. Vincent, and I now wait the event: perhaps I may be tried by a court-martial; but I have one satisfaction, that all the captains agree that I have done my duty, and executed my orders with respect to the above; therefore I am as happy, my dear father, as one can be, and hope soon to see you, and all the dear family at Godwick.

Not a word of promotion; that remains with you and my friends in England. I have no prospect of it from Lord Keith, but the slightest word from Lord St. Vincent would do the business. I remain, &c.

This was a trying moment to a father's feelings; and in great anxiety he applied to Lord St. Vincent, through his friend Mr. Coke, to

know the probable result of the affair with the Neapolitan brig. His lordship only answered, that he had made him a post-captain: but several months elapsed before the long-wished-for intelligence reached the Mutine.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Mutine, Constantinople, March 23rd, 1802.

MY DEAR FATHER,

Four days after writing my last I sailed for Malta, and received immediate orders from *my good friend* the Commander-in-chief to sail with despatches for Alexandria, where I arrived safe, after very heavy gales in the passage.

You may suppose I was not much pleased with the prospect of seeing Egypt once more. I had quite enough of it in war, and, of course, in peace it became more intolerable than ever. No prizes now-a-day, but the same dull, inanimate scene constantly before you. Believe me, I am heartily tired of the station, and every thing belonging to it, and willingly would I quit the Mutine, and return to England (could it be done with propriety); but however unpleasant my situation may be here, you know I must have

an eye to my future prospects, and how far such a step might be justified by my friends in England is doubtful. The general way of getting over difficulties like these is pretended sickness, and consequent discharge to sick quarters, but that is what I am determined never to practise; and rather would I remain another ten years from England, than be guilty of such a step, which, believe me, is as foreign to my character, as it is from the true discipline of the service. Not only is the station unpleasant, but I have the satisfaction of seeing young men, like myself, who were midshipmen since I have commanded the Mutine, now put over my head, and not, I believe, from any misconduct on my part, but owing to their interest with the commander-in-chief. I allow that I got made commander from my interest with Lord Nelson, and that I should have been further promoted had he retained the command; but with Lord Keith the case is very different, and I only know him as commander-in-chief, and myself in a subordinate situation under him. When I asked him the other day at Malta to allow the Mutine to carry his despatches to England, he advised me to

remain out in this country till the orders for the fleet sailing to Britain arrived, and a few days after sent me to Egypt, being the *pleasantest station* in his command.

Soon after my arrival at Alexandria, I received orders to take on board Mr. Stratton, Secretary of Legation to the Embassy at the Ottoman Porte, and convey him to Constantinople, where we anchored yesterday, after a pleasant passage of five weeks.

I dined yesterday at Lord Elgin's, the British Ambassador, and spent a very agreeable day. They are remarkably attached to a blue coat, and Lady Elgin is one of the pleasantest women I almost ever saw. Lord Elgin's bad health requires his going to the Isle of Scio, where I shall convey him and his family. We sail to-morrow or the next day, and after seeing him in safety at Scio, I am to return to Alexandria, where I have the pleasant prospect of remaining all the summer, under the scorching beams of an Egyptian sun; but sailors are born for all weathers, and let what will happen, we have no right to grumble.

I think it almost time to make some inquiries

after my dearest mother, and the dear friends at Godwick. How long am I to be absent from them, and indeed from every thing I hold dear in this world? There is some satisfaction in hearing from those we love. I am unfortunately denied even that privilege, for I have not heard from England these seven long months. How truly unfortunate that all your letters should miscarry. Fortune at last may be tired, and change for the better. Yours, &c.

This last visit to Alexandria had proved most detrimental to the health of Captain Hoste. A severe fever, brought on by the air and climate of that country, terminated with an attack of inflammation upon the lungs for a considerable time, which so much reduced his strength, as to give great apprehension for his life. Then was laid the foundation of that fatal malady which, during the remainder of his life, occasionally preyed upon his delicate frame, even prior to his last illness; but his incessant activity was never abated by his want of health, which unhappily escaped the notice of his friends, or perh[illegible]ight have still been spared to them

and his country. Arriving at Athens with despatches for the British Ambassador to Constantinople, then residing at that place, he was received into his house when scarcely able to walk from the ship, where the kind and unremitting care bestowed upon him by Lady Elgin assisted so far to restore him, that he has frequently said he owed his life to her attention. His sense of gratitude he failed not to express with his usual warmth of feeling, in the following letters to his parents. The intelligence he there first received of his promotion to the rank of post-captain, added not a little to re-establish strength and health to his enfeebled frame.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Mutine, Athens, May 21st, 1802.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I doubt not but that you are already acquainted with what I am sure you will consider of the first importance to me,—I mean my late promotion by the Admiralty, which I learned from Lord Elgin, and which has since been confirmed to me by Captain Calcraft, of the Anson, and who is late from Malta.

At the end of a long war, and the probability that peace may continue for some time, you must be sensible how great a step it is; and how much I am indebted to my friends in England, I want words to express. Immediately on my getting my commission, I shall write both to Lord St. Vincent, Lord Nelson, and Mr. Coke, and thank them most heartily for their goodness. To Lord Nelson I know not what to say; he has taken me by the hand from my first entrance into the service, and has never ceased his good offices till he has got me a post-captain's commission. O that I may ever have it in my power to show my gratitude! Next to my dearest father and family, who is there who has half so much claim to my gratitude and respect as Lord Nelson? Him I look upon as almost a second father, a sheet anchor, whom I shall always have to trust to. You know my obligations to that worthy man so well, that it is needless for me to dwell further on the subject. I saw a letter from him to Lord Elgin, dated in February, wherein I was happy to observe he seemed to write both in health and spirits.

It is a great satisfaction, after nine years' war,

to gain at last the object of our wishes. Had a peace been made, and I still continued on the commanders' list, probably I should never have arrived to the height of my profession; now my time goes on.

TO MRS. HOSTE.

Mutine, Athens, May 23rd, 1802.

MY DEAREST MOTHER,

I am now writing from the house of one of the most amiable of women; indeed, she has treated me so kindly, that I shall never forget it. But you are wondering all this time who this amiable person is. It is Lady Elgin, whom I wrote about, and mentioned in my last to my father, at Constantinople.

To tell the truth, I have been lately very unwell, and coming from Alexandria, I was ordered, in my way to Malta, to call at Athens, with despatches for Lord Elgin. During my stay, they have contrived to get me quite stout and hearty, and the good news which has reached me, completely set me up. The Narcissus frigate was ordered to call at Athens, which she did; and in the course of conversation, the captain happen-

ed to mention the late naval promotions, and amongst many others mentioned mine. Judge, then, of my astonishment when, on my arrival here, I was informed I was made Post from the Admiralty. I know there are several letters, with my commission, lying at Malta.

I shall, in all probability, sail with the division of ships for England, when the arrangements are made of what force will be left in the Mediterranean; so that, in all probability, I shall eat my Christmas dinner at old Godwick, after an absence of nine long years. But I have the satisfaction of knowing that those nine years have not been thrown away, and that I am now in a fair way of attaining the height of my profession, which I shall ever think myself the luckiest fellow in the world for having embraced, and which I am determined to stick to as long as this frail body will hold together.

Thank God, I have got entirely clear of Egypt altogether, although a little illness has been the effect of my visit there, which is now quite gone.

TO MISS HOSTE.

Mutine, at Sea, June 3rd, 1802.

MY DEAR SISTER,

We sailed with the Anson frigate on the 27th inst. from Athens, in quest of some pirates, who, according to report from Lord Elgin, had captured an English ship, murdered the captain and crew, and taken the vessel into Coron.

On our arrival at Coron, we were happy to find our information was false, and that an Imperial vessel had been seized on by her own crew, and afterwards given up to the pirates. Of course we had nothing to do with the Imperialists, and we left Coron on the 3rd for Zante, where I shall wood and water, and then proceed *solus* to Malta.

I have just parted from Lord Elgin. Lady Elgin is a woman that I am sure you would be delighted with. She has all the spirit which every woman ought to have, without pride or affectation; she is also a very excellent nurse, and got me quite well after a bad fever, which I caught at Alexandria.

I was highly gratified with the beautiful re-

mains of antiquity that still lie at Athens. The Temple of Minerva, erected by Pericles, is still remarkable for the magnificence of its ruins. The beauty and size of its marble pillars, with the sculpture, &c. are beyond any thing I ever saw before, and it must require a much abler pen than mine to give you an adequate idea of so beautiful a structure. A temple erected by the Athenians in honour of Theseus is still in good preservation, and well worth observing. Indeed, every step you take, helps to give you an idea of what an immense place it formerly was, and one does not wonder at the fable of the gods disputing the patronage of it.

The present town is the most miserable place I ever was in, and forms a strong contrast with the magnificence of the former one. The present inhabitants of Athens are Greeks, but degenerated not a little from their ancestors. I think I never saw a more miserable set of people altogether. Smoking is their daily amusement, and they seem as if born for nothing else. Very few are industrious; and the country round Athens is not by any means well cultivated. I am convinced they walk over the ruins of their

country without ever thinking (or perhaps knowing) that such a place as Ancient Athens ever was.

If I mistake not, Aristides was an Athenian, and styled "The Just," from his inflexible integrity. Alas! how altered are his posterity, for I never saw such a set of knaves as the Athenians of the present day.

I would not lose so good an opportunity of seeing the Island of Salamis, rendered so famous by the victory gained by the Grecians over the Persians. There is nothing worth seeing, but that merely you may say you have been there. They pretend to show the tomb of Themistocles, but, for my own part, I could see no remains of any; perhaps that was *my* fault.

Remember me to all friends; to my dearest mother, and the little ones. Adieu, my dearest sister, and ever believe me to remain

Your affectionate brother,

W. Hoste.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Greyhound, at Sea, June 22nd, 1802.

MY DEAR FATHER,

On my arrival at Malta from Zante, I found, as I expected, some letters from Godwick, and if it was possible to add to the happiness I now enjoy, it will be on hearing that you are all well and happy. Your letters of course gave me the most heartfelt satisfaction, and as you observe in yours, you cannot imagine a more happy fellow than I must be on hearing of my promotion and appointment to the Greyhound. I was sure that my good fortune had made my dear father and all my friends happy; and if I felt that but for a moment, I had answered your expectations in the line of life I had chosen, I was amply recompensed for all the little

> "Whips and scorns of time, the oppressor's wrongs,
> That patient merit of the unworthy takes,"

and which, believe me, in the cockpit often used to make me wish for old Godwick, though I fancy they were not always unmerited.

I joined the Greyhound the 14th instant, and am very much pleased with her indeed. It seems

quite so different a life to what I led in the Mutine. Instead of that *little brig*, I have now the command of a fine thirty-two-gun frigate; and, in short, I cannot describe how happy I feel at this very moment and how deeply sensible I am of the interest my friends in England have taken in my promotion. I am sure I shall ever endeavour to justify their choice in patronising me; and that they may not have reason to regret my present appointment, will always be my first consideration.

The congratulations I received on my promotion were numerous, and from a great many, I am sure, they were sincere; indeed, they were very flattering, and I could not help saying to myself, have I really deserved these marks of attention? Captain Martin, of the Northumberland, is the best friend I have in this country; in all difficulties I apply to him, and have ever found him ready to give me advice and assistance, which from his long services he is fully capable of affording. He was captain of the Irresistible in 1797, when Lord Nelson had his broad pendant on board her, after the action of the 14th of February, when, you may remember,

I accompanied his lordship; since that time, he has ever been my staunch friend. There is another young man of the same age as myself, Captain Briggs, of the Madras; we are very great *cronies*.

On my arrival at Malta from Zante, we were put in quarantine five days. Sir Richard Bickerton asked me to take the Consul General Le Mesurier from thence to Naples in the Greyhound, which of course I complied with, and we are now on our passage, just going through the *dreadful* pass of Scylla and Charybdis, which, I think, old Ulysses had some difficulty in passing.

I beg you will write again and again, as it is quite uncertain when I shall sail for England. I intend writing to all the family, or else they will say, "the right epaulette has made him forget us." That, I can answer for, will never be the case, "whilst memory holds a place in this" *not* "distracted brain."

I am extremely sorry to hear poor Langford is so badly wounded; pray give my best remembrance to him, and tell him that I congratulate him on the bravery and conduct he has shown

even in the cannon's mouth, though most sincerely do I regret his being so cruelly wounded. How can I return sufficient thanks to Almighty God for his having carried me safe through so many dangers?

TO MRS. HOSTE.

Greyhound, Naples Bay, June 1802.

MY DEAREST MOTHER,

I have this moment anchored in Naples Bay, and before I enter into the gaieties of this dissolute city, I shall with pleasure finish a letter to the best of mothers. I shall begin with hoping most sincerely that you are all well at Godwick: you can form no idea how ardently I long once more to become an inmate of the old house. You are never absent from my thoughts (I may almost say) for a moment. I anticipate the delight I shall experience in seeing you all well, and, I hope, happy, after so long an absence. Perhaps I shall play the fool, and bring up with a *wet sail* after all, which in your *land lingo* is whimpering a little.

The Neapolitan troops have sailed from this place to garrison the island of Malta, and as

soon as the troops arrive from Egypt, I doubt not but we shall be off for Portsmouth. Really, when once I see the Land's End, or any part of England, I shall be almost mad with joy. I consider myself as one of the happiest fellows in the world, and have not one wish unsatisfied, but that of seeing you all at Godwick.

On appearing off the bay of Naples, we fell in with the English and Neapolitan squadrons that were convoying the King of the two Sicilies to Naples from Palermo; we were ordered to form one of his escort, and of course had the satisfaction of seeing his *triumphal entry* into the capital, which was uncommonly splendid. I could not help laughing most heartily at the triumphal arches erected in the place for his reception. It must appear truly ridiculous to every one to see the honours of a triumph given to a man who, in the hour of danger, had basely deserted them, and was obliged to flee his country. The illuminations were very grand indeed, and did the inventor a great deal of credit.

The King landed at his villa at Favorita, close to the Portici, and from thence went on horse-

back to Naples. I do not think he was well received by any means. About two or three hundred old fishermen welcomed him on shore at Favorita, and the Russian grenadiers were his guards, which is very strange, and shows the little confidence he places in his own troops, and not without reason.

The squadron were all dressed in colours, and saluted as his Majesty passed, and on the whole it went off very well, and was worth seeing. Perhaps it may never happen again, that a King who has been twice driven from his kingdom by the enemy, without the smallest exertion either of him or his subjects, should twice return and enter his capital in triumph. I believe I am rather in disgrace with the Sicilians and Neapolitans, for destroying their man-of-war last summer, but I don't care much about their good opinion. They stare a little at seeing me in so fine a frigate.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Greyhound, Naples Bay, July 15th, 1802.

MY DEAR FATHER,

Since my last, I have received orders to remain at Naples till the Neapolitan troops are ready to embark to take possession of the island of Malta, which I am afraid will be some time; and therefore I shall not have the pleasure of seeing you so soon as I expected, as we do not seem inclined to leave the island. I consider myself fortunate in being ordered to remain in Naples in preference to Malta, as the latter is so very unhealthy, without the smallest entertainment whatever, and the same dull scene continually before one's eyes. At Naples, the case is different, and one may remain some time there without its being unpleasant. The Neapolitan squadron have sailed a few days ago for the Adriatic, to escort the Queen from Trieste to the capital. The Algerines are looking out for them, and of late have been very troublesome.

I hope still to have some good shooting in Norfolk this season, and hunting also. I brought an Arabian horse from Egypt, who has been

universally admired. I paid twelve guineas for him at Alexandria, and have been offered fifty for him here, but I shall endeavour to take him to England with me: he leaps uncommonly well, and the knowing ones say he will make an excellent hunter.

The poor old Mutine has been here, and sails to-day for England. The officers wanted to come with me sadly into the Greyhound; and if you are at Portsmouth, or where she is paid off, I am sure you will pay them some attention for your son's sake; they are a very good set of young men.

TO MRS. HOSTE.

Greyhound, Naples Bay, August 1st, 1802.

MY DEAREST MOTHER,

Agreeably to my promise, I embrace with pleasure the opportunity of writing, although with a thousand times more happiness could I dispense with pen and ink, and once more have the pleasure of paying my *devoirs* in person. You, my dear mother, I am sure, are well convinced how ardently I long to see old Godwick, and its still dearer inhabitants; indeed, I

think of you and all the family more than ever, and the many disappointments I feel in endeavouring to get home, are almost beyond bearing. The affection you testify in all your letters to me, gives me the greatest happiness; it convinces me how high I stand in the opinion of the best of women and mothers, and believe me it is returned, if possible, a thousand times over. That I am well and happy, I am certain you will not be sorry to hear of, and believe me, I have no wish unsatisfied but that of seeing England.

I like the Greyhound more than any ship I have ever been in. We have a very good set of young men for officers, so that we are quite comfortable and happy amongst ourselves. In so confined a place as a ship, it is the greatest comfort to have a set of gentlemen about you, whom you can associate with. I wish you could pay a visit on board the Greyhound; I have just got my cabin fitted up in great style, and every body admires it very much that has seen it. When I think how happy I shall be on seeing all the family at Godwick, the little amusement we have at Naples appears a mere nothing; but I have no business to murmur, and ought to

consider myself one of the luckiest fellows in the service: yet still the fond idea of meeting you, and the length of time I have been from England, makes me think it rather hard that I cannot get home.

Good heavens! what a length of time, indeed, since I parted from you. I call over the many, many scenes I have witnessed since, and am almost inclined to believe it is a dream. Had I known, on parting, I was to have been separated so long from those I held dearest to me on earth, I think, however pleasing the prospect of a sailor's life might have been, I should have declined the trial: that trial, thank God, is over, and I may now, I trust, return to my friends with the pleasing thought, that I have not disgraced them, and what credit and promotion I have gained, has not been thrown away on one totally unworthy of it. I am fond of the profession I have embraced; I think it one of the first in the world; I would willingly give up all my time and pleasure to it; and, indeed, I think a man's life is nothing, when lost in the service of his king and country.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Greyhound, Malta, August 18th, 1802.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I take the opportunity of the Madras going to Naples, to give you a line. I wrote to you in Naples, and informed you I was destined, as I thought, for the Archipelago. But since my arrival at Malta, I have been told by report, that the Greyhound is ordered for one of the Egyptian squadron. How far it may be true, I know not, but wherever it is, be not alarmed, for my length of time in the Mediterranean is almost expired.

Sir James Saumarez is ordered for this station, and he will of course soon be out, when we shall all be ordered home. There is no fear but what I shall be happy, wherever I go, although the Egyptian station is not the most pleasant; but I of all people in the world ought not to complain. I left Naples with little regret, but compared to this place, it is a paradise. I am now on board the Madras, where, I told you in my former letter, I have the best of friends in Captain Briggs, who commands her.

TO THE SAME.

Greyhound, Oristagne Bay, Isle of Sardinia,
Oct. 20th, 1802.

MY DEAR FATHER,

Since my last in Naples, I have been for the most part in Malta harbour, which, believe me, I am heartily tired of. I received secret orders to proceed to Toulon, to reconnoitre; and have just returned from thence to this detestable spot, where I have met with Sir Richard Bickerton and the squadron, off Malta; and when or for what place we quit this, God knows.

I can only say, I never was more heartily tired of any thing in my life than I am of this peace sailing. I begin now, however, to have some hopes that that happy time is not far distant. Some hints which Sir Richard gave me yesterday, have led me to believe that the Greyhound will shortly sail for our land of liberty, and I have the most sanguine hopes I shall still get my Christmas dinner in old Godwick. The bare idea almost drives me wild, and when I once see the best of parents and friends in person, my joy will, I think, know no bounds.

Lady Bickerton is just arrived from England, and is a very pleasant agreeable woman. What little I have seen of her I like, and think she will be a great improvement to our circle in the Mediterranean.

Seven long months have elapsed since my hearing one line from any of the family. Lady Bickerton acquainted me the other day of her having heard in England, that there were great complaints at home about my not writing. I must beg leave to contradict the report, as it is so totally without foundation, and I can safely say I have never missed one opportunity since I have joined the Greyhound.

I think I shall sail to-morrow morning, but all orders are so secret, that I know not where my destination is. You will soon hear of me again, and it will not be long, I trust, before you will have a quarantine dinner on board the Greyhound.

TO THE SAME.

Greyhound, Genoa, Nov. 3rd, 1802.

MY DEAR FATHER,

In my last I informed you that I looked forward to the hopes of soon seeing my dearest friends in England; that hope, I trust, will speedily be realised, as I have got orders, after calling at Genoa and Leghorn, to take the homeward bound convoy to Gibraltar, and I think and trust I shall be able to get home from thence. You need not fear my straining every nerve for that purpose, and my long stay abroad will, I think, plead strongly in my favour.

The ship, indeed, wants repairs as well as her captain, who is heartily tired of the old *jog trot*, and wants to get his *land tacks aboard* quietly. I begin to think if I do not *bear a hand* and get on shore, the war will break out again, and I shall be obliged to take to the old trade of thrashing those Frenchmen, whom, in peace or war, I have a mortal aversion to.

You will have heard of the revolution in Switzerland, which has, I think, turned out well. I hope it will be an example to the republics in

Italy to throw off the French yoke. The Genoese are, I believe, heartily tired of them, but the Premier Consul keeps them too much under, and Buonaparte's word is a law, here at least.

TO MRS. HOSTE.

Florence, Nov. 14th, 1802.

MY DEAREST MOTHER,

I think I said I should proceed to Leghorn from Genoa in my last, and I arrived safe there the 10th. Previous to our leaving Genoa, I made acquaintance with Sir Francis Drake and his family, who were then on their way to Florence and the south of Italy; and at his request, had the pleasure of escorting them to Leghorn, in the Greyhound, from whence we immediately set out for Florence.

I cannot describe to you how highly delighted I am both with the party and the place itself. The gallery at Florence has universally been reckoned, and very justly, the seat of the arts, and on my seeing it yesterday, I assure you my expectations were more than satisfied. It has suffered greatly from the late war; as much from

the weakness of the government, as from the depredations of our *très aimables amis*, the French.

The famous statue of Venus de Medicis was conveyed from the gallery in 1800, in the Santa Dorothea, English frigate, from Leghorn to Palermo, and remained there till the peace; it is now at Paris, and will probably remain there for ages. It is certainly the last time we shall ever see it in Italy, and I rather think it is better it should remain at Paris than in the gallery here. I have been looking to-day over the most beautiful paintings I ever saw in my life, and I assure you the party I was with did not add a little to my pleasure.

Sir Francis Drake is descended from the celebrated Drake, the navigator, and a very good man he is. In short I like the whole family, and think it is the happiest time I have spent since I left England: but, oh! how willingly, my dear mother, would I give up every place and society in this country to fly to Old England; indeed, I hope it will not be long ere I shall be there.

I propose leaving Leghorn on the 18th if possible, and shall get to Gibraltar the latter end of

this month. I trust I am then to get the ship patched up, and remain for further orders; but I hope I shall be able to get Sir Richard Bickerton, or the commanding officer at the Rock, to send me to England. I won't flatter you with hopes, nor do I wish to tease you with uncertainties, therefore shall drop the subject, but can only say it is the dearest wish of my heart once more to embrace the best of mothers.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Greyhound, Leghorn, Nov. 28th, 1802.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I left Florence the 19th, and parted with Sir Francis and Lady Drake with the greatest regret. I never, on so short an acquaintance, was more attached, and I am convinced, the more I know of them, the greater will be my esteem. I know not the weather you have had in England, but I can assure you I have never seen such for these last ten years as the present. It is rather an advantage to me perhaps than otherwise, as it will season me to the climate of Old England. I am waiting here entirely for a wind, or for

even moderate weather, for I am so anxious to get to Gibraltar that it would not be a trifle that would stop me. I hope I shall not be detained at Gibraltar, for I will change into any vessel that I can possibly find to get to Old England, rather than come aloft again.

We had great expectations of another brush with the Frenchmen, and fears were entertained that the war would commence with more fury than ever. Leghorn would be a principal sufferer, as the place is full of English manufacturers and merchants, and a French garrison constantly remains here. There are between six and seven thousand Frenchmen in Tuscany at present, and there are no hopes they will soon quit such good quarters. In time of war, their vicinity to the island of Elba, where they have possessions, will render our trade in the Mediterranean very precarious, particularly the coast of Italy.

I have not heard from Malta since I left it in September, but I understand we have a strong squadron there, and that our garrison still remains. Most heartily do I hope that island, at least, will remain under the English Govern-

ment. I pretend not to be a politician; it is sufficient I am a seaman: but every man with common sense may observe at what disadvantage we shall commence the war in this country, without one single port or creek for our fleets to repair to in the Mediterranean. If once we evacuate Malta, I think we may take a farewell of the Mediterranean, for I do not think we shall have any business here whatever.

TO THE SAME.

Greyhound, Gibraltar, Dec. 29th, 1802.

MY DEAR FATHER,

You will see by the date of this, that I still remain in this delectable spot, and sorry am I to say, there is at present but little prospect of my soon quitting it. They are giving the ship a complete refit, and are endeavouring to make her serviceable, but I think will fail; she is so very bad. I have no information or news.

Sir Richard Bickerton, by last accounts, still remains in Oristagne Bay, but what purpose his being there can answer, I am at a loss to discover. We are in daily expectation of hearing from him, and probably there may be orders

come down for the Greyhound's departure for Old England, but I cannot flatter you with hopes of seeing me very soon, though ardently do I long that those hopes may be realised. We must meet in the spring if the peace holds good, which is, I think, rather doubtful.

We understand Sir James Saumarez will be out by April with the peace establishment, and then we shall all sail for home; but that is a long time to look forward to, when I consider that in seven days I might be with my friends in England, and then I think it would be difficult to find a happier fellow than myself in his Majesty's dominions. I am sorry we are so badly off for hounds in Norfolk, as I am sure I shall be much pleased with a good chase, though, seaman-like, I am no great horseman, and I believe more of a sailor than a jockey.

I had almost forgotten to mention, that five sail of French ships of the line passed the Straits on the 26th, bound, I suppose, for Toulon. I think it looks like a war more than a peace.

TO THE SAME.

Greyhound, Gibraltar, Jan. 22nd, 1803.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I have this instant received your letter of the 21st instant; to say how happy the contents made me, would be needless. It is the first time since my leaving England, that a letter from you reached me so speedily, and you cannot conceive how delighted I was, when I was sure that within the last month you were all well; pray Heaven you may continue so! I heartily congratulate George* on his receiving

* The third son of the Rev. Dixon Hoste. He received his commission in the corps of Engineers in 1802; and in 1805 went with an expedition under General Sir James Craig to Gibraltar, Malta, Naples, and ultimately landed in Sicily. He was in the battle of Maida, and at the siege of Scylla Castle; afterwards in Egypt, under General M'Kenzie Fraser, and present at the taking of Alexandria, and attack on Rosetta. He then returned to Sicily, where he served in different parts of that island, until he was present at the attack and taking of the island of Ischia and Procida, in the bay of Naples.

In 1810 he was in the Spartan frigate, Captain Brenton, when that distinguished officer engaged a squadron of Neapolitan vessels; for which he received from Ferdinand King of Naples, the Order of Merit, and he was recommended by Sir John Stuart for a Majority, but was considered to be too young. He returned to England in 1811.

In 1813 he served in Holland with Sir Thomas Graham, and was present at the attack on Antwerp, and storming of Bergen-op-Zoom,

his commission in the Engineers, but am fearful I shall not reach home before his leave of absence expires.

The Bittern arrived here to-day, eleven days only from Spithead. The report is, that many of the Mediterranean ships are ordered home; in that case the Greyhound will most probably be included in the list of homeward-bound ships.

I have not received Lord Nelson's letter, but I am happy to hear he is well, and sincerely do I hope he is happy also. I had a Mameluke sword given me in Egypt, which I got mounted and sent it to him as a present; for so much am I indebted to him, that though I am now independent of his services, I shall never forget that it was through him I am so. Had war broke out and Lord Nelson been commander-in-chief in this country, I should have considered myself

for which he obtained the brevet rank of Major. He returned to England at the peace; and on the recommencement of the war he joined the army at Brussels, and in the battle of Waterloo was attached to the Prince of Orange's corps (1st) as Commanding Engineer, where he greatly distinguished himself: he was employed as a commissioner to give over the French fortresses on the northern frontier to the Prussians. He was employed on a committee in America 1825; and in the same capacity in Ireland in 1828. He was made C.B. after the battle of Waterloo.

particularly fortunate for many reasons; though I confess I am better pleased matters stand as they do, for in case of war, the Lord knows when I should have seen old Godwick.

When you write next, let me know, if you can, where George is to be sent to, as I am acquainted with a good many officers of the artillery and engineers. You may recollect Colonel Wilmington, of the former, at Lord Townshend's. He made himself known to me the other day, and says he is acquainted with you. He is a very good man, I think, and I like him much. Colonel Holloway, of the Engineers, I brought over from Alexandria to Constantinople, in the Mutine, last year.

We have not heard a word from Sir Richard Bickerton since my last. The latest accounts mention his still lying in Oristagne Bay. We had a dreadful stormy winter, and in that open roadstead he must have been exposed.

I shall now conclude, my dear father, with best love to all at Godwick.

TO THE SAME.

Greyhound, Gibraltar Bay, Feb. 1st, 1803.

MY DEAR FATHER,

Your letters of the 21st of October, reached me yesterday, by the Monmouth, from Sir Richard Bickerton. I am sorry you seem so disappointed at the Greyhound not being ordered home. You will easily credit my assertion, when I assure you I have done every thing in my power to get ordered home, but that business in Switzerland, and the unsettled state of affairs on the Continent, makes it necessary, I believe, to have a large force in the Mediterranean; and, consequently, the ships that are now on that station, must wait till relieved by others from England; and, by all accounts, seamen are so little inclined to enter in men-of-war, that I fear I must make up my mind for another two or three months in this delectable spot.

The sailor you were good enough to take care of, did belong to the Mutine, but did not come with me from the Theseus. Poor fellow! he lost his arm, as he told you, in cutting out some vessels on the Italian coast. Should you see him

again, give him a good dinner, on my account; for though he did not bear the best character with me, yet he was as brave as a lion, and behaved very well in the fighting way.

Adieu, my dear father. Remember me to all at Godwick.

TO THE SAME.

Greyhound, Gibraltar Mole, Feb. 28th, 1803.

MY DEAR FATHER,

This rock is the most unpleasant place I ever had the misfortune to be stationed in since my coming to sea, and I would almost prefer Botany Bay to it.

Sir Richard Bickerton is still at Malta, where he will most probably remain till the peace establishment (if there is ever to be one) arrives. You, my dear father, will perhaps conclude that I have not taken the proper steps to get home. I have asked Sir Richard Bickerton repeatedly to allow me to sail for England, but he has it not in his power to grant it, I believe. You cannot conceive how anxious I am to see you and all the family. Believe me, sir, it is seldom from my thoughts; and though I am as happy

as a man can be, in the Greyhound, I would willingly sacrifice every interested motive to the long-expected happiness of seeing you all at Godwick.

We have the current report of war at this place, but I most sincerely wish it may not yet break out, though, God knows, the peace our wise ministers have made, is, in my opinion, (and I am not singular,) the most shameful that ever disgraced the annals of our history. I would rather have remained ten years more out from England, than have seen the present treaty carried into effect. That Corsican vagabond will never stop till he has endeavoured, at least, to ruin the country, and pray Heaven his endeavours may not prove successful!

Pray give my best respects to Lord Nelson when you see or write to him. I hope most truly, if ever war takes place, I may belong to the squadron he commands. We hear of a number of frigates fitting for foreign service; I hope they will soon be here. Since the Dragon sailed from hence to Malta, I have been left the senior officer in the Bay of Gibraltar.

There is a regular post from the Rock to

England, and by putting your letters in the common post-office, directed to Gibraltar, they will find their way. I have not the smallest prospect of leaving this.

On the 8th of March, the Greyhound was ordered to England, where she anchored at Woolwich on the 4th of April; and Captain Hoste, to the inexpressible joy of himself and family, in a few days joined them at Godwick Hall.

BOOK II.

FROM 1804 TO 1807.

I stood not by thy feverish bed,
  I looked not on thy glazing eye;
Nor gently lulled thy aching head,
  Nor viewed thy dying agony.
I felt not what my parents felt,
  The doubt—the terror—the distress—
Nor vainly for my brother knelt—
  My soul was spared that wretchedness.
One sentence told me in a breath
My brother's illness—and his death.

My Brother's Grave, by MOULTRIE.
Etonian, vol. iii.

BOOK II.

FROM 1804 TO 1807.

APPOINTED TO THE EURYDICE.—TAKES OUT A CONVOY TO GOREE. DEATH OF HIS BROTHER DIXON.—APPOINTED TO THE AMPHION BY LORD NELSON.—EMPLOYED ON THE COAST OF SPAIN UNDER LORD COLLINGWOOD.—ACTS IN CONCERT WITH THE BRITISH ARMY ON THE COAST OF CALABRIA.—SURRENDER OF REGGIO AND COTRONE.—DEATH OF HIS SISTER.—RETURNS TO ENGLAND.

CAPTAIN HOSTE was appointed in November 1804 to the Eurydice, and joined her in the same month.

Soon afterwards he proceeded to Gibraltar with a convoy, and resumed that interesting correspondence with his family, which tells the story of his own actions with so much simplicity and truth. Little remains for the historian, but to transcribe them faithfully. Hitherto, they have chiefly related to public events; zealous for the honour of his profession, cheerful under every trial, and warm in his country's cause. But if the activity of a sailor's life has more to

engage the mind, it has less to interest the heart than private affection and domestic virtue; and when these latter qualities have reduced into example (as they did in him) all the best principles of philosophy and religion, they enforce instruction by giving delight, and teach the facility of performing our duty by showing us the way. May those who wish to equal him as a hero, strive to emulate him as a Christian! And may all who have to undergo such heavy privations, bear them with the same fortitude, and submit with the same resignation to the will of God!

TO MRS. HOSTE.

Portsmouth, Nov. 25th, 1804.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

You will be surprised still to find me at this *delectable* spot, but I am merely waiting for orders; I believe the ships and trade, bound to the Mediterranean, not being assembled from the different ports, is the reason why they have not sent me off. Certainly, my destination is for Gibraltar, and I hope my orders may be to join Lord Nelson, but that is doubtful. A

thousand thanks for your very kind letter from Wolterton.

I have been on board the Eurydice, and in a little time hope to make a man-of-war of her; for she is any thing but that at present; a good little ship, and I thank that dear Lady Townshend a thousand times for her kindness. I saw Captain Rutherford yesterday at a court-martial, and had a long prose with him about Lord James, who I am happy to say, by his account, bids fair for being as good a seaman and officer as ever stepped the quarter-deck. Rutherford is a plain, honest tar, and carries candour and truth in every feature of his countenance. I like him very much, and am glad Lord James is with so good a man.

Give my love to my father, and tell him I should like to shake him heartily by the hand before I sail. I think we shall have a Spanish war, and then, without being troubled with convoys, (which of all things I most detest,) I may stand a chance of picking up a little *money*. I have a very excellent cabin, better, I think, than in the Greyhound, and in a little time shall be comfortable, though I am afraid I *too* often think

I am sure you feel interested in whatever concerns me.

From what I can learn, I do not believe that Lord Nelson will return to England yet, for some time at least; but there are a variety of opinions, and a Spanish war will decide it. That does not seem quite decided on, but ultimately I think we must have a *brush* with the Dons; it is no harm to say "God send."

I found Admiral Montague uncommonly friendly at Portsmouth; he is universally spoken well off. I saw Captain Martin also, and if you will send him some game now and then, you will oblige me much.

TO THE SAME.

Eurydice, Dec. 14th, 1804.

A thousand thanks, my dear father, for your letter, which reached me yesterday. I am now under weigh for Gibraltar with a fair wind down Channel, and expect to be clear off the Land's End or Scilly to-night.

You must excuse this scrawl, as I am in a most violent hurry. I think the Dons are in for it *at last.* I wish I may have a brush with as many of them as they please before I return.

TO THE SAME.

Eurydice, Gibraltar Bay, Jan. 9th, 1805.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I arrived here yesterday, after one continued tempest since I left England, and during which the whole of my convoy parted company. I have heard, however, of all but one having arrived at their places of destination, which has eased me of considerable anxiety. I am now this instant getting under weigh for Goree, and expect on my passage I shall meet with some good Spaniards.

The ships and cruisers under the command of Sir John Orde have realised immense fortunes; and a man-of-war brig about the size of the Mutine, which I fell in with a few days ago, has really taken so much specie, that the brig would not carry it, and it was obliged to be put on board the Swiftsure, 74. I think the weight was estimated at thirty tons of hard Spanish doubloons and dollars. It is really a fact, and yet the man is not happy or contented who has certainly made an immense fortune;

and what makes it more extraordinary, he had not sixpence of his own six weeks ago.

I am heartily glad I am going from this place, which bears the most melancholy marks of the dreadful malady which has raged with unceasing virulence for these last four months. I am afraid to ask after any of my friends whom I left here two years ago; but I am truly sorry to say, all that remain in the garrison bear the most dismal looks. Indeed, it is truly melancholy, I assure you; for independent of the fever, (which is exactly similar to the West India yellow fever,) from all communication being cut off with Barbary and Spain, they are literally now, with very few exceptions, living on salt provisions, which does not of course assist in recovering the too numerous patients. The number of military who have fallen, amount to about eight hundred and fifty or nine hundred; and the inhabitants are supposed to have lost about five or six thousand. You may suppose what a picture the rock presents just at this moment.

The disease has, I am happy to say, abated much, and there has not been a death for some time; but many people are afraid that the hot

weather will bring it on again. I have not been on shore, nor is any person allowed to go on shore from the ships of war. General Broderick and the secretary land to-day, or rather, go on board one of the transports. Before this reaches you, I shall probably be on my way back to England.

I wrote a long letter to Lord Nelson, who I find, from one of his squadron who is here, is very anxious I should be with him again, and I doubt not but I shall be with him soon. He is quite in wrath that Sir John Orde has been appointed to the command at Cadiz; and indeed I think they have treated him very scurvily; for, what from his services and his wounds, the least thing they could have done was to let him have had the chance of replenishing his purse, for I believe he has rather a *southerly wind.*

The Spaniards have begun to equip their numerous gun-boats, and I expect I shall have a brush with them for a little while, as I am going through the Gut.

Remember me most affectionately to my dear mother, and all the dear dear inhabitants of Godwick. I think of you every hour, and some-

times walk the quarter-deck till I am lost in the woods about Godwick; or castle building, till I am at last quietly settled at Clement Lodge.

Farewell, my dear father, and believe me to be your affectionate son,

W. HOSTE.

TO THE SAME.

Eurydice, Jan. 11th, 1805. Cape Spartel.

MY DEAR FATHER,

You will not be sorry to hear that I this day captured a jolly Spaniard from the Havannah, bound to Barcelona, laden with logwood. It is not a very valuable cargo, but better than *nothing* certainly. I have sent her to Gibraltar, and am in such haste, I can hardly wait to finish this. I expect to have another of these, or better I hope, in a few days. Her cargo will fetch about £800, I understand, which for one day's work is not so bad.

TO THE SAME.

Eurydice, lat. 18° 30′ North, long. 31° 40′ West,
Feb. 12th, 1805.

MY DEAR FATHER,

The *date* of this letter bears evident marks of its coming from the regular shop, and is assuredly no counterfeit. I have been on the look-out for these last seven days for a homeward-bound Spaniard, and am quite disappointed that we have not ere this taken one, or at least seen one, for I am now in the track of their South Sea traders, and ought to have had one or two in *tow* before this time.

I left Porto Praxa on the 4th instant, and every man or boy in the ship has been anxiously waiting for a visit from our good friends the Dons. However, we have as yet seen nothing but the same unvarying scene of sky and water for these eight days, and from being at the mast head these two hours without success, I am come down in the cabin with that *happy* equanimity of *temper of mine* rather ruffled.

I think I have read somewhere, that there is a consolation in telling our misfortunes to others.

Mine, however, thank God, are not of that description that could give any pleasure in unburthening them to you, and in my short stay in this world, I have as yet had very little to do with misfortune or care.

Out of sight out of mind, is not my creed, I assure you; I do not know how it is, but I think more of home and Old England this trip than I ever did in my last: perhaps it is from having left you so lately. At any rate, I do not find the recollection of past scenes unpleasant; indeed, quite the contrary; and whenever the duties of the command allow me to *think* at all, I generally find myself quietly settled in Norfolk.

I do think a sailor's life is the strangest way of passing time that ever was thought off. At present, a clock does not go with more regularity than the discipline of this old *hooker;* the same happy variety every day. No absolute monarch can be more *despotic* than a captain of a man-of-war, *if he pleases.* No character, and, indeed, no creature existing, has it so much in his power to render the lives of those under his command either miserable or happy; and though I *may* be supposed to speak of the favourable side,

yet I do think the happiness, or even comfort of individuals rests too much on the authority of one single person. Though I nevertheless say, that if you were to abridge their power the smallest in the world, you would ruin the service; or at least you might as well take our commissions away altogether.

TO MRS. HOSTE.

Eurydice, lat. 18° 40′ N, long. 31° 30′ W.
Feb. 13th, 1805.

MY DEAREST MOTHER,

I wrote to my father from the Straits of Gibraltar a short letter, mentioning my having captured a Spanish ship from the Havannah. I remained four days off Cape Spartel looking out for some more Spaniards, but was not fortunate enough to see any, and my orders obliged me on the fifth day to bear up for Goree on the coast of Africa, which I mentioned in a former letter was the ultimate purport of orders. Nothing extraordinary happened during our passage, which, though rather a stormy one, was, from the fineness of the climate, much preferable to channel cruising.

We made the Canaries the 20th of January, and you may imagine it brought very unpleasant ideas when I saw again the Peak of Teneriffe, the memento of the graves of so many of our gallant countrymen. I thought of poor Weatherhead and our former friendship more than once, and was not sorry that a good fresh breeze quickly carried us out of sight of that detested island.

To drive away many an unpleasant recollection, I resolved to sail to the island of Palma, which did not lie much out of our course, and see if I could not take some Spanish vessels out of the road. Accordingly at daylight in the morning of the 21st, I appeared close in off the town of Palma, and by the help of an American ensign, and disguising the ship as much as possible, the Dons allowed me, without any molestation from their batteries, to take possession of every vessel in the bay. At that time I would not have taken some *thousands* for my share of prize money; but judge our disappointment, when out of eight vessels all Spanish, there was not one that had a cargo worth taking, and really from their being more plague than profit,

I gave them all leave to go about their business. I do not think they were acquainted with the war. I was, with every officer and man on board, much disappointed, but we intend making up for it this cruise.

I arrived at Goree the 29th; and to my great joy found the ship which had been ordered to put herself under my convoy, (but which had separated in a gale of wind,) already arrived. You can form no adequate idea of so miserable a hole as Goree; it beggars all description, I assure you. The whole extent of the island is about three-quarters of a mile in length, and half a mile broad: very rocky, and does not produce one single article of any description whatever. The only service it is to those who garrison it, is the protection the bay affords to all nations trading to the coast of Africa. It is miserably fortified, and about 400 men, one half of them convicts, compose the garrison.

I shall mention more of this place in another letter, but shall conclude now with best love to all.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE JUN.

Eurydice, lat. 18° 40′ N. long. 31° 30′ W.
Feb. 13th, 1805.

MY DEAR DIXON,

I have written two long letters this morning, but I believe I am in writing trim to-day, and cannot throw away an idle hour better than by convincing my friends in Old England, (if they want proof,) that in the middle of the Atlantic I have not forgotten them.

Perhaps at this moment you are skating on Titteshall Pond, or freezing with cold over one of your favourite duck ponds. You will hardly credit me when I say, that for these last three weeks I have been almost stifled with heat, and half burnt with the piercing rays of an almost vertical sun. Goree is in latitude 14° 50′ north, almost forty degrees of latitude difference from England; and I have never, even in Egypt, found the heat so oppressive. You may recollect the Eurydice cabin, which is rather spacious for so small a ship; I sleep every night with all the windows open, and doors also, and still am too hot; — but this is

nothing to what it will be in another month. Thank Heaven, I shall be away before then. There is no moving out of doors in the day, in *their* summer; and the inhabitants of Goree, who go without clothes, even now call it *cold*, when a European is glad almost to follow their example from heat.

I never saw so miserable a place as Goree; I would not be bound to live there for all that Government could bestow. The men and women natives are all blacks, excepting a few, who, by intercourse with the Europeans, are a sort of copper colour: it seemed so strange to me, almost every person being as black as your hat, and the plainest, most ill proportioned set of people I ever met with. They wear scarcely any clothing, are partial to the English to a fault, and are very faithful and attached.

I found lying here in the Lark sloop, Captain Langford, who has been on the African station for some months past; he has been extremely unfortunate, and has only taken one small schooner the whole war. Of course we had a good deal of Norfolk, and I find he abominates the very mention of the county; he says every

I was out yesterday the whole day, and had very excellent sport. We hired a guide, and our party consisted of two of the officers, my servant, and old Bronte. We saw a great number of Guinea fowl, but so wild, they would not allow us to come near them. I killed eleven wild turkeys, and might have killed as many more, only the heat was so intense, there was no bearing it, and we were all very glad to get home to Port Praya, where an old black lady prepared a *dinner*, if I may call turkey and fish, fried together in oil, and cocoa-nuts just gathered, by that name.

How I did wish for my dear father to have seen us at that moment; he would never have *forgotten* it. The old black dame has many slaves, who act entirely by her directions, and it is really quite distressing to see how human nature is debased by these wretched people. They know no will but their master's, and seem perfectly contented with (what appears to us) their miserable condition. One cannot however be surprised at this, when we recollect that being torn from their families, and all they held dear in this world at a very early period, (for they are all

brought from the coast of Guinea,) and brought up to the vilest usage from the time they are able to work, or I may almost say crawl—we cannot be surprised if they lose all respect for themselves, and consider restraint and violence as the great rule of their duty. Poor wretches! how often as I pass them, do I bless myself, and return thanks that I was born in a country where slavery is unknown, and liberty considered as the most sacred of blessings.

It would be a good thing for those who are complaining every day in England on the hardship arising from the heavy taxes, and the consequences of the war, now and then to have it in their power to be an eye-witness to scenes which have fallen, and which so frequently fall, to the lot of the sailor to see. For my own part, I do not think I shall ever repine at what happens in future, for I have unavoidably been a witness of such sights of wretchedness and misery, that I bless my stars when I think of my own situation compared with those unhappy people. You will abuse me for thus moralising, and I hardly know how I got into so long a story, but you have only, when you

feel tired, to put it into the fire, and there ends my nonsense at one blow.

A remarkable instance of a monkey's sagacity and feelings happened to two of our officers shooting, and which has determined me never to shoot one as long as I live. Coming home after a long fag, the purser saw a female monkey running along the rocks, and immediately fired. She fell with her young one in her arms. On the purser coming up, she grasped the little one close to her breast, and with the other hand pointed to the wound which the ball had made, and which had entered above the breast. Dipping her finger in the blood, and then holding it up, she seemed to reproach him with being the cause of her death, and consequently that of the young one, to which she frequently pointed. I never felt so much as when I heard the story, and it serves to show how strongly the parental feelings are implanted by Nature, even in the brute creation.

Farewell, old Dick, and believe me your ever affectionate brother, W. Hoste.

The Eurydice returned to England at the end of April, and in pursuance of her orders, underwent repairs at Portsmouth for foreign service, and then proceeded to Gibraltar. While detained at the former place, the following letters were written; for the time did not admit of Captain Hoste paying even a short visit to his home.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE, JUN.

Eurydice, Portsmouth, April 21st, 1805.

MY DEAR DIXON,

I have only time to say, I am this moment arrived, all hearty, from the coast of Africa. Poor George is off; I am exceedingly disappointed I could not see him before he sailed. Write to me directly, and give me all the news; tell me your plans, and if you intend being in town, for if so, possibly I shall be able to meet you, at least for a few days.

Farewell for the present.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Eurydice, Portsmouth, April 21st, 1805.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I am this moment anchored at Spithead on my return from Goree, and learn from my good friends here that you have been gone from hence but a very short time. How unfortunate I did not arrive two days sooner, to see George before he went off! I fell in with the expedition the day after it sailed from hence, and had I known he was on board any of the ships, I would have boarded the whole of them to have found him out. Where he is going, thank God, is a good station, and I own I am heartily glad he is gone there, for most probably he would have been shipped off for the West Indies very soon, if he had not gone there. Poor fellow, I am quite sorry I did not see him before he went.

I have inquired at the artillery mess, and find he embarked on board the same transport as the commanding engineer; therefore, doubtless he would be in a good ship. I might have been of some service to him, because I should have

known what he would have wanted most. I dare say he was in high spirits; a fine prospect before him, and I wish to Heaven I was going the same way. What will become of me, God knows. The ship wants some repairs, which will take up about a fortnight, and I understand I am to take out the Quebec convoy;—if so, I shall be terribly disappointed, for there is nothing in the world so tedious or unpleasant as being all weathers tied to a convoy.

Do pray exert what interest you can, and get me out to the Mediterranean with Lord Nelson. I have got my little ship every thing I want her, and if I am not always tied to a convoy, should do very well, but a convoy in war is the very devil, and I am much afraid I am to be pestered with one always.

TO MRS. HOSTE.

Osborne Hotel, Strand, May 1st, 1805.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

I have not seen my father since the receipt of your letter, which he desired I would open. In the first place, you have made us quite happy to hear dear old Dick is so well:

pray Heaven this sharp weather may not throw him back. I leave town this evening per mail; my father, who is quite hearty, follows me to-morrow. I need not say how glad I am that he goes down to Portsmouth; the longer I can keep him, and the more I see of my family the short time I shall stay in England, the better. How I do wish that previous to my departure I could give you all a hearty squeeze of the hand, but that is impossible.

I think I mentioned in my last *harum scarum* letter, that I had received instructions for the Mediterranean convoy. You will, I am sure, be happy to hear I am going to so good a station; I think we shall have a little service and plenty of prize money.

The French fleet have, by report, reached Cadiz; and Sir J. Orde has been obliged to raise the blockade, after being offered battle by the combined fleets. Still I hope Lord Nelson will get hold of them, who is certainly close at their heels. Thank God, the war is alive, and we shall have no more blockades I trust, for if they will give us one chance only, it is all we want. Farewell, dearest mother.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE, JUN.

Portsmouth, May 5th, 1805.

MY DEAR OLD BOY,

I hope by this time you are got pretty stout again, though the weather has been so very unfavourable, that I do not flatter myself with hearing of a very rapid improvement. How I do wish, my dear Dick, I could shake your honest old hand once more before I left England, and that we could have a hearty laugh together at Godwick: but we cannot have every thing we wish for, and you must make amends for your absence this time by a long stay with me when I return.

My father, thank God, never was better either in health or spirits. He has been on board the Eurydice, and was delighted with her, I assure you, although we were refitting at the time. He could not see her to advantage.

TO MRS. HOSTE.

Spithead, May 10th, 1805.

MY DEAREST MOTHER,

I am rather alarmed at not having heard from the good folks at Godwick these some days past, and am afraid, because you cannot give me good accounts of the invalids, you will not write. What cruel cold weather we have had for May! I never felt anything like it, and am certain poor Dick must be better than *bobbish* to stand it. I can only hope he will hold his own, for as to recovering, I do not expect it whilst this cold weather continues.

Here I am still with the convoy, signal flying for Mediterranean; pray Heaven, I may sail soon, for this vile hole is getting more stupid than ever. We are quite ready for sea, and with half an hour's work would be under sail, and out of Spithead. There is a report in circulation, that the expedition under Sir James Craig has returned to Falmouth, in consequence of orders sent to that purpose. Not a word about the combined fleets has yet been received,

and we still remain in the dark as to their destination. It is an extraordinary circumstance, as well as an unfortunate one, that so large a squadron should have been able to escape the vigilance of our Mediterranean fleet, and that, though met on their passage to Cadiz, and seen to sail from thence again, not one vessel has been left to watch their movements, or discover, by the course they steer, where so large an armament is destined. People will talk, and an admiral, who not long since had a command on the coast of Spain, will, it is said, be made to answer for his conduct on a recent occasion by a public investigation.

We are all liable to err, but when negligence is attached, and the service suffers by it, we have a right to demand the reason for such conduct and neglect. Surely there ought to have been some vessel left to watch the enemy's motions. I still hope Lord Nelson will come up with them.

We are all on the alert at this place to reinforce the Channel fleet, which amounts to about thirty sail of the line; a force more than sufficient to beat the combined fleets.

Pray give me a line directly, as I am anxious about dear Kate and Dixon, and how my father stood his fag home.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE, JUN.

Spithead, May 12th, 1805.

MY DEAR DIXON,

I cannot say how happy I am to find you are once more able to wield the pen. You have had a hard bout of it, but I hope you will do very well now. If you would follow the example of your *younger* brother, and take more *care of yourself*, it might be *better*. We have not a word of news; all anxiously waiting to hear where the combined fleets are gone; various conjectures, but no certain account has yet arrived.

I expect to sail every day with the Mediterranean convoy. I shall be heartily glad when I am clear of this place, for there is nothing to do all day but play at billiards. I hope ere this that Kate has recovered her usual looks; you seem to have had a sick house for some time. I think it will go hard with the immaculate *Billy** to-morrow night: all the navy men are up

* Alluding to Mr. Pitt.

that can get leave, who are of the house, and most of them are of the good old set; we shall have to drink to the glorious one hundred and thirty again, I suppose. I think *Billy* must broom this bout, though he is such a devilish clever fellow, that it requires a heavy purchase to start him.

They say a certain great personage is assisting the Whigs as much as he can in the Catholic business. What do you think of the caricatures my father brought down? Is not the rapid effects of Whitbread's Entire excellent? If he had remained at the Admiralty another week, I understand the post captain's pay would have been increased to forty shillings a day; no joke, I assure you.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Portsmouth, May 21st, 1805.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I have just time to say I have this moment received my orders for sailing, and that they are such as my most sanguine hopes could wish or expect. I take under my command a sloop of war and brig, and outward-bound trade

to Portugal and the Mediterranean, and put myself under the orders of the senior officer on the Mediterranean station, from whence I hope not to return, till I have gained plenty of credit and plenty of cash.

I am at this moment one of the luckiest and happiest fellows in the world. I hope I may probably hear from you again before I ultimately quit England. Pray send a line on to Falmouth to say how dear Dixon and Kate are, for that is the only thing which causes me uneasiness at this moment. I know you will partake with me in the happy and glorious prospects now before me; a nice little frigate, and going under my gallant patron on the very ground which, a few years ago, was the theatre of so much honour to him, and to all under his command.

Give my best and dearest love to my mother and all; after we have beat these Frenchmen, how truly happy I shall return to old Godwick, and enjoy with the satisfaction of having done my duty, all the pleasures of a long-shore life! I sail this day, I hope. Farewell, my dear dear father. I need not tell you to think of little Eurydice sometimes. A father's blessing, they

say, always has an effect: I am sure of yours then, and shall return to you all safe and hearty. Once more, God bless you, and all at Godwick, and believe me, my dear father,

Your ever affectionate son, W. Hoste.

TO THE SAME.

Eurydice, off Oporto, June 1st, 1805.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I have just time to say that we are all hearty, and after a pretty good passage arrived off this place. The Locust brig parts from me this evening with the trade for Oporto, and will then proceed to England. The expedition under Sir James Craig are arrived safe at Gibraltar, and, I understand from Sir Richard Bickerton, will remain there some time, at least till things are more settled: it is still a mystery where they are going.

Lord Nelson left Sir Richard Bickerton on the 6th, and sailed for the West Indies with ten sail of the line. How unfortunate that I did not fall in with him! Admiral Knight remains at Gibraltar, and for the present commands in the

Mediterranean. Admiral Collingwood commands off Cadiz, with nine sail of the line. The Spaniards have by all accounts formed a junction with the Carthagena squadron, and are now ten sail of the line strong at Cadiz. I hope and think we may still have a brush with them. How I reckon on seeing dear George at Gibraltar! he little expects me. We shall have a brush with the gun-boats on our arrival in the gut.

I hope your invalids are quite recovered by this time. God knows where I shall be ordered to on my arrival at Gibraltar. I shall endeavour to stay with the expedition, for I like amusement in any shape, and I think I stand a fair chance of seeing some soon. No one knows where the combined fleets are gone to,—I mean in this part of the world. Farewell, my dear father.

TO MRS. HOSTE.

Eurydice, Gibraltar, June 19th, 1805.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

Thank God I am arrived at the old rock without losing one of my convoy, and quite hearty to boot. I have just seen dear George, who

is as well as ever I remember, and in his usual good spirits. I leave you to judge how mutually happy we were to meet each other. He is quite comfortable on board his ship, but heartily tired of the rock, which is not much to be wondered at; for of all hot disagreeable holes, that surely is the worst. We dine and live together of course, and whenever his duty on board will allow him to quit the transport, he is always with me.

They are still in anxious expectation for orders; and Admiral Knight wishes them anywhere but where they are, for fear of an attack from the Spanish gun-boats, who are uncommonly strong at Algesiras, having no less than forty gun-boats, besides other armed vessels, and who, from their late movements, seem inclined to attack us. They may annoy us with long shots, (a Spaniard's delight,) but they will never do us any material damage in that mode of attack. It is intended, should they attempt any thing of that kind, to dash at them with our ship of war boats, and by boarding at the moment carry them; and it is my firm opinion, (which I told Admiral Knight the other day,

when asked by him what I thought would be the best mode of attack,) that that would be the most effectual way of sickening the Dons; and I have not a doubt of its success.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Eurydice, at sea, June 26th, 1805.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I am ordered to see my convoy to Malta, and place myself under the orders of the senior officer, so you now see me in my old station, fixed, I trust, for the war. I had to fight a stiff battle with Knight to let me stay up the Mediterranean. He wished me to amuse the gunboats, which is no joke, I assure you, particularly as our guns are so short that our shot would not reach them, when theirs would go over and over us.

I understand there is plenty to be picked up on this old station, now that the English fleet have left it; and the dreaded name of Nelson being gone, makes it still more likely for those French and Spanish gentry to make a dash. I have been fortunate enough to bring all my

Where the expedition is bound, is beyond my weak comprehension; the variety of opinions as to its destination would puzzle any one. Whether the Russians are to act with us in the expedition of the French from Italy, or whether we are to *attempt* it with six thousand men we have here, is still a mystery. Never, I believe, was any piece of service more closely closeted than at present, and I am of opinion, from its not being known, that the noble Commander-in-chief is in the dark himself, and waits for orders from England; but true it is, that we are six or seven thousand men cooped up in this oven, without the smallest idea of where we are to go. Sicily is not the place, I think; nor without the alliance of either Russia or Austria, can we expect to be of the smallest service in Italy against the immense force the French have there; and, I firmly believe, the good wishes of the inhabitants are in their favour also, whether from fear or love, I won't say, though I do not think the British character is much liked; they are jealous of our being at Malta, which is so considerable a depôt for any expedition to the Italian States. Yours, &c.

The Eurydice was shortly afterwards ordered to join the fleet off Cadiz, then under the command of Lord Nelson; soon after which, Captain Hoste received the melancholy account of the death of his eldest brother Dixon,* the loved companion of his early childhood.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Gulf of Cadiz, Sept. 22nd, 1805.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I hardly know how to begin this letter, nor ever did I experience such painful sensations as at the present moment. The loss we have all sustained in my never to be sufficiently lamented brother, falls most heavily on us, and I am sure requires all our fortitude to bear up against it. Sir William Bolton had the goodness to break it

* The Rev. Dixon Hoste, whose brilliant abilities and exemplary conduct obtained for him the admiration and esteem of all with whom he was acquainted, still more did his amiable disposition and manners deservedly engage the warmest affection of all his relatives and friends. He was born August 1st 1779, educated for the church, and took a senior optime degree at Cambridge; and would probably, from his abilities, have been high among the wranglers, but was unable to study to the extent of his wishes from bad health. He was elected Fellow of Trinity, and sunk under the effect of pulmonary consumption, July 19th, 1805.

to me, and I shall ever have a sincere esteem for him for the manner in which he did it, though the harbinger of the heaviest misfortune I have met with in this life. Oh, my dear father, how you have all suffered at Godwick for that dear boy, and I know from my own feelings, how agonized you have been for the fate of so truly and dearly loved a son! My dearest mother and family I am afraid to inquire after; and letters from England are to me almost as much dreaded as they were before this irreparable loss desired. Poor dear Kate, pray Heaven she may stand up under this misfortune, though I confess I tremble at every paper I see, for fear something still more unfortunate, if possible, may meet my eyes.

To your fortitude, my dear father, they must now look up for example and strength, through Providence, to bear up against our misfortunes. If it were not for the unceasing activity which my present situation requires, both in mind and body, I know not how I could bear the loss of one who was so deservedly beloved and esteemed. Bred up together, we ever had the fondest affection for each other, and the remembrance of his worth makes us feel it no

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severely. Keep up the spirits of my dearest mother, and Kate, and all; tell them, though they have lost one so near and dearly loved, they have still others remaining who will make it the whole object of their lives to increase their happiness, and who live only to be the prop and support of our dearest friends. If you could read my heart at this moment, you would know how I suffer for my dearest brother; but though he is gone from us now, we are taught to believe we shall meet him hereafter, and your own maxim has ever been, "The Almighty's will be done!"

The gloomy and melancholy disposition of my mind at this moment, will, my dear father, little help to cheer your sad fireside, but I cannot so far outrage my feelings, as to endeavour to conceal, under an appearance of happiness, the fond remembrance of a dearest brother, and the severe affliction I suffer for his loss. My prayers are, that Heaven in its mercy may again restore the happiness of Godwick, and bless the declining years of my beloved parents with peace and happiness; and that the recollection of past sorrows may be accompanied by prospects of

future happiness. I say nothing of myself, but am well, and in the post of honour, where I trust your son will ever be found, off Cadiz.

Farewell, my dear dear father; remember me to all, and believe me your ever affectionate and dutiful son, W. HOSTE.

TO THE SAME.

Eurydice, Oct. 1st, 1805.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I have just received yours of the 5th of September, and it has eased me of such a load of uneasiness, that, comparatively speaking, I am now happy to what I was a week ago. Keep your spirits up, my dear father, as well as you are able, and remember, for all our sakes, you should endeavour to bear with the severe stroke you and all of us have felt. Pray Heaven may preserve you and all the family! I long to see you; indeed, I trust I might be able in some measure to alleviate the sorrow which I know and read in every line of your letter is bearing too heavy upon you. Pray tell my dear mother that I will answer her kind and affectionate letter, if possible, before this vessel sails.

I am now on board the Victory, and have seen Lord Nelson, who is as good and as friendly as ever. I think I may get a larger ship; and depend on it I shall take young Stamford with me, who is very well, and is going on as well as I can wish him. I can hardly think of any thing else but your house. I feel most severely the loss we have suffered, and I know not what I should do if the active situation I am in here at present, did not almost deprive me of the power of doing any thing but looking after the combined fleets, who are closely blockaded in Cadiz. I belong to the in-shore or advanced squadron, and for these fourteen nights have had hardly a wink of sleep. We are obliged to keep from two to three miles off the harbour's mouth, and I am heartily glad I have so active a situation.

I wish to see you all, particularly at the present moment, when I know how you want society. I have a great deal to tell you, and think my talk, though not in the best spirits, might amuse you a little. Lord Nelson is very well; inclined to serve me, I am sure.

TO MRS. HOSTE.

Eurydice, off Cadiz, Oct. 1st, 1805.

MY DEAREST MOTHER,

Thank you for your truly maternal and affectionate letter of the 5th instant. It is a consolation, indeed, that you are in some measure less wretched than when you wrote last. Although you will long, very long, feel the loss of my dear brother, yet do not let that severe loss entirely subdue you, but remember, my dear mother, how much the happiness of us all is connected with your own, and endeavour to get over it, by a patient resignation to the will of the Almighty. How much must you have suffered! and what a time you must have had of it. Thank Heaven, dear Kate is better, and I hope now will do well.

I need not say how anxious I am to hear from you, though almost afraid to open your letters. Tell dearest Kate to take care of herself, for I know not how I should bear the loss of more of my family; and, indeed, I have suffered not a little lately, but, thank Heaven, I am well and happy (this day at least) to hear that all at

Godwick are doing better. I do remember, thou best of mothers, that you have now a double claim on me; and the whole tenor of my life shall prove how dearly you all are beloved by me, and what pride I shall take in rendering you every support and consolation in my power. Keep my dear father's spirits up, and bid him look forward to better days. I still hope for many happy hours over your fireside; and though the remembrance of that dearest boy will ever cast a shade over our brighter moments, still we must remember that we trust we part not for ever, and submit to the will of Providence.

I have not seen dear George since August; how severely will he suffer on hearing of our sad loss! I have written to him, and enjoined him to bear up against it as well as possible; his affectionate heart will feel it deeply indeed. I wish I were with you, but dare not think of it; how can I? Placed in the post of honour, to quit it now would be madness, and I must give up all idea of serving.

I dine with Lord Nelson to-day, and I understand I am to be appointed to a larger ship. He is a good man as ever lived.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Amphion, Oct. 13th, 1805.

DEAR FATHER,

I am this day appointed to the Amphion, one of the finest and most desirable ships on this station. I am sure you will all be happy to hear that I am going on so well; indeed every thing wears a better prospect, and though tinged with melancholy, the hurry and bustle of a ship, and fresh employment for both mind and body, may drive away for a little time the recollection of our recent loss. I dare not think of it, and I endeavour to drive from my mind all that happened in the society of so deservedly dear a brother. Pray write to me often, tell me a great deal of and about the family, and all our friends. I have no pleasure equal to hearing of their welfare. I am anxious at this moment, not only for your health, but to know that you are in some measure reconciled to the loss we have sustained. You told me in your last you were unhappy; pray Heaven, you may now write otherwise.

I need not mention the kindness I have re-

ceived from Lord Nelson; his present appointment speaks for itself. I could not, had I had the choice of frigates, been appointed to one more to my liking. I know this will please you, and pleasing you, my dear father and mother, and making you all happy, will ever be my first and only wish. If you knew how I love all at Godwick, you would never be uneasy for an instant in not hearing from me. I long to see you, indeed I do. You may suppose the hurry I am in, in shifting my baggage, &c. &c.

God bless my dear, dear father.

About this time, as may be seen by the foregoing letter, Captain Hoste was appointed by Lord Nelson to the command of the Amphion, thirty-six-gun frigate; and on the idea that the combined fleets would not immediately come out from Cadiz, Lord Nelson sent him to Algiers with some presents for the Dey. On his return from this cruise, he first heard the intelligence of the decisive and ever memorable victory which the English gained over their enemies off Trafalgar, and the death of the commander-in-chief. Oh! who can tell the agony

of his mind on receiving such melancholy news? What to him was the proudest day in English history, when his friend and patron was no more! Gifted with that quick capacity which enabled him to appreciate talents, and that noble disposition which led him to value and esteem and love the character of that unequalled hero, the loss to him, above all others, was irreparably severe.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Amphion, Gibraltar Bay, Nov. 9th, 1805.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I have just time to say, that I am as well as a man can be, who has lost the best friend he ever possessed. I know not how to begin. I believe I said in my last, I was ordered to Algiers by that ever-to-be-lamented man, with presents to the Dey. I left the fleet on the 15th, and on the 21st the battle was fought. Not to have been in it, is enough to make one mad; but to have lost such a friend besides, is really sufficient to almost overwhelm me.

I sail instantly to join Admiral Collingwood, who is off Cadiz. I will write to you more fully

in my next, when matters are more settled; at present, I am not fit for any thing. I like my ship very much; as the last gift of that excellent man, I shall ever consider her, and stay in her during the war.

I hope you are all well. I would have written before, but this is the first opportunity that offered since the Victory sailed, and I had not arrived from Algiers then. Remember me to all friends. I am low indeed, and nothing but a good action with a French or Spanish frigate will set me up again. Write to me, I entreat, every opportunity.

TO MRS. HOSTE.

Amphion, Gibraltar, Nov. 15th, 1805.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

I mentioned in my last, my intention of giving you a line as soon as I had seen Admiral Collingwood, our present commander-in-chief. I find he perfectly understands how and in what manner I have gained my present rank, and the footing I was on with that poor, good, great man, Lord Nelson. He is remarkably friendly indeed, and I am sure will give me a good cruise as soon

as possible. Do not be surprised, my dear mother, if this is remarkably stupid, indeed it would be singular if it was otherwise.

I cannot get over the loss of our late noble Commander-in-chief in so short a time. Never shall we find his equal, and never will the navy of Great Britain furnish a man with half his abilities. I never saw such firmness, such decision, in any man in my life before. His last words to Captain Hardy were, to sink rather than strike his flag, and that he died happy in having seen that day. I understand there is a monument to be raised to his memory by the officers serving under his orders, and that it is to be erected on Portsdown Hill.

I am now refitting, and shall be ready and most probably sail on the 16th, but where is quite uncertain. The admiral is a very different man from Lord Nelson, but as brave an old boy as ever stood. We are daily sending home our lame ducks that have suffered most in the action, and the remains of the much-boasted combined fleet, are six or seven sail of the line in Cadiz harbour.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Amphion, Gibraltar, Nov. 21st, 1805.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I take the opportunity by my old friend Captain Capel going to England in his frigate, the Phœbe, to say, I am still lying in this horrid hole, waiting for orders from Admiral Collingwood. I believe we sail this day with him, first for Tetuan and then for Carthagena, where the Spanish fleet of nine sail of the line are ready for sea. Our force will be about seven or eight. I am afraid no inequality of numbers will bring the Dons out after the dreadful example of the 21st of October. I think there will be a squadron of frigates detached after Jerome Buonaparte, who has been cutting a variety of capers in the Mediterranean these some months past, and who, I am in great hopes, will touch English ground before the war is finished. If I could but get him within gun-shot of the Amphion, he should have reason to remember it.

I heard from George a few days ago; he was on the point of sailing with the expedition to join the Russians, who will then be a very strong

body of forty or fifty thousand men. I think things wear a better prospect than they did, though the Austrians have been exceedingly beaten on the Rhine. All idea of invasion is, I suppose, at an end. I think there is a probability of peace; the Corsican can never stand against all Europe combined against him, though, hang him, he is an extraordinary man. We had a report here the other day that the Emperor of Russia had been assassinated: I hope not true.

How does my dear mother do, and all? I long much to see you all, though the sad remembrance of a much-loved brother would be a dreadful damp to the joy of meeting. I keep up as well as I can, but indeed I feel most severely the loss we have all sustained.

How is Mr. Coke? Remember me to him; what will he say to the victory? O that I had been there! it would have been some consolation to have witnessed the last heroic feats of that man, whose memory will ever be held sacred by every British seaman.

TO THE SAME.

Amphion, off Cape de Gatte, Nov. 27th, 1805.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I have just received my orders again to repair to Algiers, to settle and arrange matters with our agent there and the Dey, and am likewise ordered to proceed to Constantinople with the Dey's ambassador immediately. I do not half like the job, but, however, we are not to judge what is best, and they say, he is a good officer who does as he is ordered. The admiral has promised me a good cruise on my return, and I am still in hopes I shall make some *cash* (for, indeed, I want it) before the war is over, which is in my opinion not a great way off.

We left Gibraltar with a squadron of eight sail of the line under Vice-Admiral Collingwood on the 20th, who, after having banged so soundly the combined fleets at Cadiz, is now going to offer battle to the Spanish squadron at Carthagena, which consists of nine sail of the line. We are infinitely too superior for them, and I see no chance of an action.

I find I am in great favour with the old

admiral; he has promised me the best cruise he can give me, and desires me to point out where I should like best to go: he says I must take a French frigate before the winter is over, and pray Heaven I may fall in with one, and I have little doubt of making his words good.

We have no accounts of the expedition, only that they are sailed, supposed for Corfu, to join the Russians assembled there. Sir John Duckworth, with six sail of the line, is off Cadiz.

We have had no accounts from England since the action of the 21st. I suppose you are all mad in England with the news of so glorious and unprecedented a victory. I never think of it but with the most heartfelt sorrow, and long shall I lament the loss of that gallant brave Nelson. I forget whether I told you I wrote to Lady Hamilton; I did however, as the only compliment I could pay to so great a friend as Lord Nelson. I shall try and reach England, I think, some time next year. The ship wants docking, though I would not change for any ship in the navy. Amphion is sister to Medusa, Gore's frigate.

TO THE SAME.

Amphion, off Cadiz, Jan. 16th, 1806.

MY DEAR FATHER,

You will be surprised, I doubt not, on hearing from me so soon after what I wrote you in my last, which mentioned my having received orders to take the Dey of Algiers' ambassador to Constantinople. I am happy to say, on my arrival at Algiers, the Dey, in consequence of some words with the English agent there, would have nothing to say to me, and of course I returned to the fleet.

We have been in daily expectation of meeting with the French fleet which has escaped from Brest, but which has since returned to Rochfort. We are now cruising off Cadiz with fifteen sail of the line. I think the allies are in a fair way now of gaining us an honourable peace. The Corsican, if the Russian follows up his victory of the 4th instant, will be obliged to retreat quicker than he advanced, if possible. Amphion is every thing I could wish her, and I wish I could show you her.

I hope all friends at Holkham are well; my kind regards there.

TO MISS HOSTE.

Amphion, off Cadiz, Jan. 29th, 1806.

MY DEAREST KATE,

I want words to express how truly happy your affectionate letter made me, dated in October. After a long silence on the subject of your illness, dear girl, I had nothing but bad tidings to look for, and when the packet was given me, it was with a trembling hand and a beating heart, I dared look at the seal. Thanks to my dear father, he had forewarned me by writing "good news" on the outside; and, indeed, I returned thanks, most sincerely, that it had pleased Almighty God to spare me a sister so well beloved by all, and so truly deserving of all the affection she receives.

Keep up your spirits, my dearest girl, and look forward to many happy days with your family and friends, not forgetting dear George and poor little Guillaume. That there is not one day passes in which I do not think of you, and all the dear inhabitants of Godwick, I may safely say. However far the profession I have embraced may separate us, still the remembrance

of Godwick and its party presses upon me, and it seems, the further I am from England, the more I think of those dear relatives I have left behind me there. I hope to see you some time this year. I think the ship must go home to undergo some very necessary repairs, and as I shall obtain leave of absence, I will fly down to Norfolk immediately; therefore mind and keep your spirits up.

I have been cruising for the last ten weeks without setting foot on shore. I wish those Russians would give the Corsican a hearty drubbing, and force them to come to terms, that I might once more be a *land crab*, and settle myself quietly like a good, *sober, discreet personage.*

We are still in the old humdrum way, and likely to remain so, off Cadiz, every day an eye-witness of the fatal effects of the glorious, but, I must say, unfortunate battle of Trafalgar. The wretched remains of the French and Spanish fleets are still there, and exhibit a striking example of what British valour can perform, when aided by the genius and bravery of a Nelson. Poor man! I have every day sufficient cause to lament his loss: at any rate, he has left us

an example; and, for my own part, though I never expect to attain to the high honours he so deservedly held, yet it will be my first and earnest endeavour to follow his footsteps.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Amphion, off St. Mary's, Jan. 31st, 1806.

MY DEAR FATHER,

Thank you a thousand times for your affectionate letter of October. I had not had a line from Godwick so long, that I began to be seriously alarmed indeed for poor Kate, and, though your letter speaks pretty favourably, I am afraid there is much to fear. If she can but stand the cold weather, I hope all will go right. What a time you and my dear mother must have had these last twelve months! I am truly happy you bear the sad misfortune so well, though I am well sensible what you have suffered.

We are still cruising with Admiral Collingwood, fourteen sail of the line and four frigates, waiting, I presume, for either the Brest fleet or Rochefort.

What is old Billy Blue, alias Commander-in-chief of the Channel fleet, about? trying whether Falmouth harbour is sufficiently capacious to hold his fleet, when that of the enemy are doing as they please, and annoying our trade without mercy? It is a shameful circumstance their fleet should be at sea an hour without being pursued, particularly after so complete a defeat as they lately met with.

If our accounts are true, which we have from Lisbon by way of some neutrals we lately boarded, they have made a pretty business of it on the Continent. We hear the Russians and Austrians have been completely defeated; they were obliged to make peace on the Corsican's own terms, and the former in full retreat for Russia, after learning to their cost, that Frenchmen are not despicable enemies, even to the savage Russians. How John Bull will come off in the general rout, I confess I have my doubts and fears: he has certainly paid his proportion of *rhino*, and will be well off if he escapes without being well thrashed to boot.

TO THE SAME.

Amphion, off Cadiz, April 1st, 1806.

MY DEAR FATHER,

Your truly welcome letter reached me a few days ago, on my joining Admiral Collingwood's squadron off Cadiz. I want words to tell you how delighted I was to find that my dear mother was quite recovered from her nervous attack, and Kate so much better. Pray Heaven the fine weather may set her quite right; I shall not have an easy moment till I hear she is again herself. I have been afraid to look into a newspaper for a long time, for fear something dreadful should meet my eyes; but I hope and trust, with the care you have taken, she will soon resume her usual good looks.

I have little news to tell you. Napoleon seems to carry all before him, except on our element; there I trust he will find his match. The enemies' ships which escaped from the Trafalgar contest are now being repaired, and in great forwardness; and another month will perfect them. Nine sail of the line they have apparently ready for sea; but I don't think they are ready, though all rigged. After such a drubbing, they

require some time to regain their courage and discipline.

What a change in administration! I congratulate you on it most heartily. I am extremely anxious to hear from you on many accounts. I dare say you thought it very odd I never mentioned the trifling affair in Umbria, in which the Eurydice was so nearly lost. It was an anxious moment for the time, and I don't recollect ever having suffered so much as at the almost certain prospect of losing one of his Majesty's ships. I never intended troubling, or rather writing to you the account of the many little brushes or skirmishes we so often have, but reserved my letter till I could tell my dear father his son had taken a frigate, or some more important action. You will laugh when I tell you, that a few days ago, I received forty pounds for that day's business. You asked me what is become of Teresa, the vessel I captured. I know nothing about her. The Commissioners have taken her, with all others captured before the 11th of January; and whether I shall ever receive a farthing, God knows. I can only say that since my joining Eurydice in November 1804, I have never (with

the exception of forty pounds) received anything for this war's work, and I can safely swear I never worked harder.

I had almost closed this letter without saying where I am, or where I am to be. The admiral has given me the advanced squadron off Cadiz, only for a short time I believe. Most probably I shall be ordered to the expedition under Sir James Craig.

The expedition under General Sir James Craig had left England in 1805, and was received by the King of Naples, as also the Russian army, into his dominions, in direct violation of the treaty of neutrality concluded by him with the French Emperor on the 8th of November of the same year. But Napoleon lost no time in pouring his full vengeance upon Ferdinand for his contempt of his word; and, having secured by the treaty of Presburg that peace with Austria which left to her (as the only possession on the Mediterranean shore) the small port of Trieste in the Adriatic, and signing at Vienna a treaty with Prussia, he issued from his head-quarters in that city the denouncement that the Neapo-

litan dynasty had ceased to reign. It was then time for the two allies of Naples to arrange for their own security.

The Russian troops re-embarked and retired to Corfu. The English troops, unable from the smallness of their numbers to defend that extent which it would have been expected they should maintain, embarked and garrisoned Messina, in Sicily, where, Sir James Craig retiring from ill health, the command of the army was given to Sir John Stuart.

On the advance of the French army, the royal family again embarked on board a British man-of-war, and sought refuge at Palermo. The French army under Generals Massena, Regnier, and others of high repute, overran Italy, and by the end of February the whole of that country was beneath their yoke, excepting only Gaeta and Civitella del Tranto, in the further Abruzzo.

Affairs being in this state, Rear-Admiral Sir Sydney Smith was detached by Lord Collingwood to take the command of the squadron assembled for the defence of Sicily. The scene of activity which that coast then offered, was more congenial to Captain Hoste than the blockade of Cadiz, and he requested permission to be sent

there, but at that time without effect; shortly after he received orders to reinforce that squadron.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Amphion, Gibraltar, April 11th, 1806.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I have received your letters very regularly of late, and to tell you it has been a source of real pleasure to hear you are all well, is needless. I am not a little alarmed still about our dearest Kate, and I am much afraid she is not doing well—pray Heaven she may improve as the summer advances. You do not write in spirits, my dear father, and I much fear you are not happy. There is a vein of sadness runs through your letters, which makes me quite miserable, but I cannot be surprised at it; the cause is too recent, and a long time must elapse ere we can regain our former happiness. I wish I was with you, I might be able to dissipate some of the gloom; and to make you happy, were it but for an hour, would be the greatest satisfaction I could receive. Let us look forward for more cheerful times.

Let me congratulate you on all our friends being in power. I do indeed think as you do,

that they are the people who will, if possible, place Old England in the same dignified station she has held, and ought always to hold, in the affairs of Europe. I hope also they will not forget their old friends, and that you will, for your services and attachment to the Whigs, be placed in a situation where you may be of service to them and your country also. I am not surprised at Mr. Coke's refusing any title; I should have been much disappointed had he received anything. He has shown himself (what I always thought he would do) an honest man and a patriot, and must by his noble conduct have risen in every person's esteem. What do the Norfolkites say now? Not much opposition in the election of a member for the county, I should hope. I should like to be in England for a little while.

Pray tell me what interest you have at the Admiralty, and whether you think, if I brought Amphion home, I could keep my crew, for I verily believe there is not such another in the service. The ship ought to go into dock; but I will not press the admiral to send me to England till I hear from you whether, on my arrival, I

ure my keeping my crew and officers.

It is not anything uncommon, and little interest is required; but still I like to go on sure grounds, for I assure you, were I offered any frigate in the service, I would not change; but she wants repairs, and if I could effect that, and keep my men, I should want nothing whatever. Pray be very explicit in your answer on this subject. The interest which you ought to have with the present administration will be a certain means of information. All I then want is, to cruise between Cape Finisterre and the Western Islands.

Lord Collingwood is very friendly, but a very different man from poor Lord Nelson; his equal we may look for in vain. I thank you much for Cobbett's papers; I take great care of them, and have booked the whole. They are very interesting. We have been uncommonly splendid at Gibraltar on account of Admiral Duckworth's victory. I think the world will be convinced at last that when we do meet the Frenchmen we know how to give a good account of them. I hope Lord Collingwood will fall in with some of the squadron before long. It is high time I should see a little service, for this war I have been completely cut out.

TO MRS. HOSTE.

Amphion, Gibraltar, April 21st, 1806.

MY DEAREST MOTHER,

It will give you pleasure to hear I am ordered to join Sir Sydney Smith's squadron in Sicily, and of course shall see dear George. We sail immediately under sealed orders, but I know from good authority I am bound that way, perhaps not direct; and I hope we shall take a current towards Toulon and Genoa, and from thence rendezvous at Palermo or Messina. The French are assembled in great force in Calabria, for the purpose of making a descent on Sicily; they intend landing, if possible, at Messina, but with the large naval force we have there, I do not think they will find it an easy matter. Buonaparte seems determined to rout that poor unfortunate King out of his last hiding-hole. I think we shall have a little work, but very little, therefore, dearest mother, do not give yourself any unnecessary alarms either for the soldier or sailor; they will both do very well, and we shall return to dear old Godwick safe and sound, and *covered with glory.* My old

ship Eurydice, Sir William Bolton, goes home immediately; he is, I understand, to have a larger frigate, and serve under Lord St. Vincent's. I would rather remain here than serve in the channel.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Gibraltar Bay, April 24th, 1806.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I have deferred writing till the last moment, that I might be enabled to tell you for certain where we are bound; and notwithstanding I am as much in the dark as ever. We sail under sealed orders, with the Thunderer and Ajax: the former (Captain Talbot) is our commodore, the same man who took the Ville de Milan, and re-took the Cleopatra. I am almost certain it is to reinforce Sir Sydney Smith at Messina; but Talbot, whether to deceive or not, says, he thinks we are going westward. My authority is from the Admiralty secretary, who wrote to me to say, my wishes were complied with, and that he congratulated me on the prospect of soon seeing my brother. Captain Thomas, Lord Collingwood's Captain, wrote to the

same purport, and from such a quarter I am determined to comfort myself with its being true. You may fancy I am not a little overjoyed at the idea of soon meeting dear George, and what is still more, being employed on the same station, and where I can see and assist him every day, though he is just as capable as myself to work his way through the world.

A brig arrived here yesterday, from Messina; she brings the intelligence of the French army having taken complete possession of Calabria, and that they meditate an immediate attack on Sicily. It will be the invasion of England on a smaller scale. With the large naval force we have there I think they cannot succeed; but at any rate, it will employ a great part of our military force to keep possession of Sicily, for the natives themselves are averse to the present government, and their King is their abhorrence, perhaps deservedly so, for the evils which he and his good allies have brought upon them.

TO THE SAME.

Amphion, Palermo Bay, June 4th, 1806.

MY DEAR FATHER,

After, I am sorry to say, an unsuccessful cruise, we reached this place on the 30th instant, and have lain here ever since, waiting for our gallant commodore, Sir Sydney Smith, who is annoying the Frenchmen most severely on the Neapolitan coast. We expect him here hourly, and then we shall know what our station and respective services are to be.

There is no subject, of course, so interesting as dear old Godwick, and I will drop Sir Sydney Smith for awhile to inquire about its still dearer inhabitants. A long time has elapsed since any news from those I love so much has reached me, and I am not a little uneasy at having so long been kept from my letters. That I hope dear Kate is quite recovered, is what all my letters have borne ample testimony; would I could say your answers were as I could wish them, but indeed I tremble every moment I look into a paper, and now that your letters so seldom reach me, you may conceive what anxiety I lie

under. I need not add my earnest wishes that you will write by every possible conveyance.

From what I can pick up from the great folks, the troops are likely to remain at Messina and its neighbourhood. They are very well off for every thing; and, excepting a shock of an earthquake now and then, nothing can disturb them.

The French are a good deal alarmed on the opposite coast, and the idea of invasion seems out of the question with our present force. They are strong in Naples and the whole coast. Gaeta still holds out, and is most gallantly defended by the Prince of Hesse. The royal family are here; we have all been regularly introduced; and as the guardians of the expiring liberty of Sicily, are in high favour. Indeed, Buonaparte would soon lay his iron grasp on it, were it not for John Bull. Adieu my dear father.

TO MRS. HOSTE.

Amphion, Palermo Bay, June 17th, 1806.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

Sir Sydney is at last arrived, and we are in momentary expectation of putting to sea. I wrote to my father on the 4th, and had no idea

then of remaining so long at this place. What our noble admiral may think of it I do not know, but certainly, five sail of the line and three frigates might be more advantageously employed.

You will be glad to hear I am promised a cruise by Sir Sydney, immediately. I hope fortune will be a little more propitious this time, for I have not been in luck's way in the Amphion. I know not where I am going, but believe towards Genoa and the Italian coast, and so I shall make some money, for I assure you I want it. Not one farthing have I received since I left you in November 1804, I mean in the prize way; you will be astonished perhaps, but it is *true*, believe me. Yours, &c.

Cruising off the coast of Italy on the 24th of June, the boats of the Amphion were sent manned and armed to blow up the castle of Cirello, which on the 25th was completely destroyed.

Along that coast Captain Hoste continued his unremitting exertions to annoy the enemy on the beach till the 30th, when he was employed in conveying the British troops from Messina to the Bay of Eufemia, where Sir John Stuart had

been induced, by the persuasions of Ferdinand, to land four thousand eight hundred men, all infantry, to invade Calabria. The battle of Maida was fought on the 4th of July, and its success described in the following letter.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Amphion, Messina, July 9th, 1806.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I have just time to say that the army under Sir John Stuart were landed in the bay of St. Eufemia, on the coast of Calabria, under cover of the Apollo and Amphion; that dear George was landed with them; that an action took place on the 4th inst. between the British and French, and that the latter were most completely beaten.

George is in high spirits, was in the heat of the battle, and Le Fevre, his commander, told me no grenadier could have behaved better. A day more glorious for the British army never happened, and Sir John Stuart may congratulate himself on having beat the best French general they have to boast of. Our loss was trifling: forty killed and two hundred and fifty wound-

ed. The French have suffered beyond belief: nine hundred prisoners; and I am sure I will not venture to say the killed. The whole country in his favour is the consequence of this victory. I left the army yesterday, and am now going round to the southward, to act with them from that quarter.

I have seen a good deal of dear George, which has endeared him to me (if possible) still more, by his steady and gallant conduct on the field of battle. He is a fine, darling boy, and will, my dear father, be a credit to your house. When or how this will reach you, I know not, but I told George, who is adjutant, and has plenty to do, that I would undertake the writing history.

I am now on the point of setting out with an expedition to Reggio, opposite Messina. General Broderick commands, and we sail immediately. Yours, &c.

When Hoste arrived at Messina with the gunboats under his command, General Broderick was preparing an attack on Reggio, and he requested the assistance of the Amphion to co-operate with him.

On the morning of the 9th the expedition sailed: at seven the troops were all landed to the southward of the town, with a detachment of seamen, and so brisk a fire was kept up by sea and land, that the enemy sent out a flag of truce in the evening of the same day, and the capitulation was signed on the 10th inst.

At this time only two places of any consequence in Calabria remained in the hands of the French, Cotrone and Catanzaro. The former was the depôt of the artillery and stores; the latter was the head-quarters of their army under General Regnier. It became a matter of great importance to take these towns, and drive away the French from their last footing in that harshly treated country. The Calabrese were unable to accomplish it alone; for, however loyal they might be in the Neapolitan cause, they were utterly destitute of every necessary for restoring or maintaining their independence: neither arms, ammunition, nor money. In truth, they were so weakly provided for, that the enemy advanced upon them on the 12th, in the hopes of forcing their position; but the sharp fire of the Amphion and the gun-boats with her, compelled them to

retire, with the loss of eighteen killed, several wounded, and eleven prisoners.

In the evening Hoste was joined by the Crafty, two Neapolitan galleys, and three armed boats from the Madras; and a few days afterwards by a detachment of the 78th regiment, under Colonel M'Cleod. More vigorous measures were now adopted in consequence of this reinforcement; and on the night of the 25th the Amphion and small craft were under weigh, without signal, (to prevent the enemy having any knowledge of their proceedings,) and standing for Cape Cotrone.

Next day the French army were discerned in full march to the eastward, on the road from Catanzaro; upon which the Amphion and squadron anchored close off the river Tacina, and commenced a brisk fire, (though too late to attack the head of the column,) on the centre and rear. A visible impression was made, and the gallant leader had soon, as he himself expresses it, "the satisfaction of seeing their whole line of march completely broken, and their troops dispersed in different directions, and straggling in confusion up the mountains." In fact, the suc-

cess was complete. The enemy retired inland, to avoid these galling attacks, and immediately retreated towards Cassano, burning, ravaging, and destroying all the villages and towns which they passed through.

Cotrone, as soon as the army had quitted it, lost its last protection, and accordingly surrendered on the 30th to the summons of Colonel M'Cleod and Captain Hoste. The garrison was re-embarked; the fortress entirely dismantled; and forty-eight pieces of artillery, (the greater part of a very heavy calibre,) either destroyed or taken away. Thus the whole object of the expedition was as rapidly accomplished as it had been boldly undertaken and ably performed.

But melancholy news awaited poor Hoste on his return to Palermo. A year had not elapsed since death had deprived him of his dearest brother, and his most invaluable friend. The tears shed for them were hardly dry, when his favourite sister, for whom he had suffered such intense anxiety, died of consumption. The first loss seemed only a preparation for the second, and the second for a third.

"When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
But in battalions."

But though cut to the very heart with such heavy and repeated afflictions, he bore them all with manly firmness and christian resignation.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Amphion, Messina Road, August 6st, 1806.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I have but this moment anchored and received your letters of the 4th of June. To tell you what I have suffered, would be only adding useless uneasiness to those I do so dearly love; you, my best of fathers, well know how your happiness and those of all at Godwick is connected with my own. It has been a severe blow to us all indeed, and, believe me, it has struck too deep for future happiness, at least for this long long time.

Excuse this scrawl, I can neither write, nor do any thing else; I am quite lost for the present, but trust time will enable me to overcome the remembrance of my poor sister in some measure at least, for totally to forget, never can be. I wish I could see you all at Godwick,

though it will be a severe trial my meeting there. I think of every well-remembered object that once belonged to that dear girl; every thing that was hers becomes doubly dear. I have not dared to look at the miniature since I received your sad letter, and the locket of her dear hair remains and momentarily reminds me of her. Oh! how I wish to see my dear mother, and all the family:—the old house is changed; but still, my dear father, let us hope for happier days.

Dear George and myself are well, and he is gaining credit and honour every day: all speak well of him, and I am sure he will return to you, and every day give you increasing happiness in having such a son: he is just gone with General Ackland's brigade on an expedition to the northward, but as the troops do not land, and there is no chance for sea work, you must not be alarmed.

I have lately been employed on active service with the army, and trust I have done well, to the satisfaction of all. My spirits will be better, but I am cruelly depressed. I do not

know where I am going next; it is quite uncertain, and I am quite indifferent about it.

God bless you, dearest father. I can write no more.

TO THE SAME.

Amphion, Messina, Sept. 17th, 1806.

MY DEAR FATHER,

On my arrival here a few days ago, I found your welcome letter of the 30th of June. I need not say the pleasure it gave to find you were in some measure recovered from the melancholy which so many late unfortunate events have occasioned. We are quite quiet for the present, and I believe shall remain so for some time.

Sir Sydney has ordered me to remain here, to co-operate with the army, so I am afraid I am fixed here for the winter. No *prize money.* I shall not set up the *curricle,* or buy *Clermont House,* this trip; but I hope I shall again see dear old Godwick, and if our intelligence is correct, we may be in England very shortly, for report says here, that peace is on the eve of

being concluded. What happiness will it be, my dear father, to see the old house again, and that happiness increased, if possible, by the recollection of our having done our duty.

George has seen some sharp service, both at the battle of Maida, and subsequently at Scylla; and has gained much professional knowledge. It is difficult to learn the French language correctly at this place; there are very few masters, and those not worth much. I have learned it by having a master on board and taking a cruise with me: but George has not the same opportunity. I will try all I can to make him learn both that language and Italian; the former is absolutely necessary, and with all due respect to the dead languages, which, without doubt, are necessary in some cases, yet I think in an active situation, like that which Edward is intended for, the French master would, perhaps, be as useful as the Latin.

I should think if little Ned joins me at the age I went to sea, it will be time enough, but you will judge best, my dearest father, and let him come when he will, I have a snug berth for him.

TO THE SAME.

Amphion, Malta Harbour, Oct. 25th, 1806.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I left Messina on the 18th, to refit at Malta, and am to return there when completed for sea. You see I am nailed to the army, and should there be another expedition on foot, it is possible I may be the senior naval officer, though there is not much for the navy to do.

Mr. Fox's death has occasioned a good deal of sensation here; every one appears afflicted at so great a national loss; if those who are unacquainted with him regret his loss so much, what must the feelings of those be, who, from a long course of intimacy and friendship, knew how to estimate both his private and public worth: it is most unfortunate at the present crisis, and I fear will prolong this apparently eternal warfare.

I am glad you had so pleasant a time at Holkham; pray remember me to Mr. Coke when you see him. I hope he has had plenty of game this year. I long much for a day's shooting at partridges.

The French army, some weeks ago, gave us

an opportunity of trying our skill with the great guns, of which, I assure you, we did not fail to take advantage. If it is true that the north of Europe is in arms and advancing, we may still look forward to the happy prospect of peace, and the Corsican may find, when too late, the terrible effects of his inordinate ambition, and love of universal conquest.

We are quite quiet in Sicily, and, I believe, are to remain so, till *Beuone* has his hands full to the northward, when I do not doubt but some blow will be struck in this quarter.

I am just returned from Mount Etna, and was highly delighted with my *cruise*. Brydone's account is not to be depended on, and I understand he never went up the mountain. It would require more room than this will allow, to give you the journal of our voyage, and you would not find it worth reading after all.

TO MRS. HOSTE.

Amphion, October 27th, 1806, Malta.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

Although I wrote to my father a few days back, yet, as I find the packet is detained for the Sicilian bag (which I hope will also bring you one from George), I will not defer another day in giving you a line.

In the first place, I am quite angry at the thoughts of remaining here so long as it appears I shall be obliged. The ship is found to be so very bad that it will be with difficulty I can keep the sea this winter; and at all events we must go home in the spring; that is beyond a doubt. I assure you, however, happy I shall be at the prospect of soon seeing Old England, and happy indeed I shall be to meet you all at Godwick, yet I am loth to quit a station which, if I am not much mistaken gives more opportunities of gaining professional knowledge (independent of its being more pleasant) than any other in the world.

There must be something to do this next year, unless we have a peace, which I am fear-

ful, from a late unfortunate event (I mean Mr. Fox's death), is still at a long distance.

We are quite low here at present at a dreadful accident which has happened to one of our ships, which had been detached from Lord Collingwood's fleet to reinforce Sir Sydney, the Athenian. In her passage from Gibraltar to Malta she struck on some sunken rocks, called the Esquerques, in the night of the 26th instant, and excepting one hundred and twenty-five, the whole crew have been drowned. The captain of her was an intimate friend of mine, and I feel his loss severely. At this moment she is a great loss to the service.

I shall give my father a line before the packet sails, as this business of the Amphion being so bad, will require some interest to get me another ship; and I should wish to be employed in the Mediterranean, if possible, without going home, and I have a frigate in my eye.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Amphion, Malta Yard, Dec. 1, 1806.

MY DEAR FATHER,

It appears the business of Calabria has passed off very well in England. It was a gallant exploit for the British army, and proves the bravery of our troops; but taken as a national advantage, it certainly will not bear scrutiny. The King of Naples is not one jot nearer his throne than he was a twelvemonth ago. We have now fifteen or eighteen thousand men in Sicily, and I presume only wait a favourable opportunity of attacking the enemy in Calabria and Naples. If the report is true, that the French have been completely beaten by the Prussians, they must withdraw their troops from the south of Italy. It is too large a tract of land for any foreign power, so distant as France is, to keep in subjection long; and the French yoke bears hard wherever it hangs.

I have received several very friendly letters from Lord Collingwood's secretary, wherein he tells me my wishes, as far as the Commander-in-chief has the means, shall be gratified in every

way. I am ordered to co-operate with the army. No prize money, certainly; but I think it is rather a compliment than otherwise. I see some of my *friends* have been pleased to place the captain of the Amphion among a list of *distinguished Norfolk naval men!* A quiz, I presume. I think, if the Prussians have beat the French, we shall have a peace. I should like to have one or two French frigates first, and then peace as soon as you please.

TO MRS. HOSTE.

Amphion, Malta, Dec. 13th, 1806.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

I am still at this *delightful* hole, waiting till the repairs of the Amphion are completed, which will shortly be the case, and I am then to proceed to Sicily, and shall most probably remain with the army at Messina the whole of the winter. We have just received the unfortunate accounts of the battle of Jena, and total defeat of the Prussians. That wretch Buonaparte carries all before him by land; thank God there is a little piece of water between Dover and Calais, or I am afraid we should see him in

London before we are aware of it, notwithstanding the unquestionable gallantry of our troops.

We are in daily expectation of being joined by Lord Collingwood, with a considerable reinforcement. The French have five sail of the line almost ready for sea at Toulon, and the Spaniards have nine in Carthagena. I think we shall have some work this spring by sea, and I hope to give you an account of a victory before long.

Commissioner Browne, who goes home in the Serapis, and is appointed Commissioner at Sheerness, has behaved so friendly to me, that I wish to shew him every attention. I have lived in his house for these last six weeks, and tell my father, he will oblige me much by giving him plenty of game on his arrival.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Malta, Dec. 27th, 1806.

MY DEAR FATHER,

At length, after two months lying in this place, I find the old ship ready once more for sea service, and I am in great glee at the prospect of a good cruise, for, to tell you the truth, a prize

is now so scarce an article, that I begin to want *pewter* most terribly.

I have had the happiness of receiving letters from home, and you can have no idea how much pleasure it gave me, and how truly happy I was, to find that George and myself, by the business of Calabria, were the means of giving you and my family so much satisfaction, as you seem to express in your letters. Believe me, my dear father, I have more real happiness in finding one word of praise from you, than in all the newspaper nonsense they can write, and they do not seem to have been sparing of that.

TO THE SAME.

Amphion, Palermo Bay, Feb. 1st, 1807.

MY DEAR FATHER,

At length I am clear of that sad hole Malta, after having had a most complete refit. Sir Sydney Smith has been superseded in his command, and is ordered to put himself under the command of Sir John Duckworth; and I believe that squadron is destined for Constantinople, to put the Grand Seignior to rights. Captain Hallowell, the intimate friend of my re-

vered Lord Nelson, is to have the command, and I have little doubt but I shall get a good cruise, as I know him well, and he is fully acquainted with every circumstance of my life since I first came to sea under the patronage of Lord Nelson.

Good prospects, you will say. I certainly expect to make a little *matter* of *pewter*, as the ship sails well, and there is something to be picked up on the coast of France and Italy. A good French frigate would be all I wish or ask for. We are daily in expectation of Hallowell's arrival. The Sicilian Court are in despair at Sir Sydney being ordered away.

I received your November letters. Pretty tight work you must have had at the election. I wish either George or myself had been there, to have assisted our good friend Mr. Coke. I am heartily glad he has gained his point, though I had very little doubt of it. Philip Wodehouse is here now, and a very excellent fellow he is. I see a great deal of him.

TO THE SAME.

Amphion, off Malta, Feb. 13th, 1807.

MY DEAR FATHER,

The packet has just hove to for me, off the mouth of the harbour, and I have only time to say that I am well and hearty, and left my friend George *in statu quo* at Messina, ten days ago.

Sir Sydney Smith has been superseded, and Captain Hallowell commands. He has promised me a good cruise, and a French frigate will, I hope, shortly be my portion; but I have been promised so often, that I will only say, if it does not happen, I cannot be more disappointed than I have been. Lord Collingwood ordered me to Gibraltar the other day, and from thence to England, not knowing the state of the ship. I have altered it, and a worse ship was taken down the trade.

I have no time to add more.

TO THE SAME.

Amphion, Malta, March 24th, 1807.

MY DEAR FATHER,

At length I am ordered to England, and in a few weeks I expect to shake by the hand my dear father. In my last I told you I was ordered to reconnoitre Toulon, and return to Palermo. On my passage back I was disabled by the most violent gale of wind that I have ever experienced, and obliged to proceed to Malta to refit.

You will have heard of Sir J. Duckworth's battle of the Dardanelles. His forcing his passage through them will ever be reckoned as one of the most daring attempts in our naval annals. You may conceive the difficulty of the business by the statement of the batteries opposed to our force. Their largest shot of marble or granite was twenty-six inches and a half in diameter, and weighed eight hundred and sixty-four pounds, which, on a moderate calculation, would take at least three hundred pounds of powder to have effect. One of them, which struck the Royal George, made a hole eight feet in diameter, and the men went backwards and forwards through

it with ease. Jack says it is strange work playing at marbles with the Turks, but they only want another opportunity of being better acquainted with the Turks.

An expedition has sailed from Messina, consisting of six thousand men, under General Fraser, and George is included in the engineer department. Its destination is supposed for Egypt, or, perhaps, some of the Greek islands. I did not hear from him, but understood he was in high health and spirits. He will do very well, be assured. I do not think there will be any hard fighting. Alexandria will most probably be the boundary of our conquests in Egypt, more as a preventive against French ambition, than with a view of a future colony.

Poor Amphion is quite knocked up, and I must, and I hope you will too, exert all interest to get me on active service. These are critical times. No man has any business to be an idle spectator of the Corsican's victories, who is professionally military, and I would not for thousands be unemployed. My chief hopes are, that through your interest with Mr. Coke, I may be enabled to get a frigate directly. Amphion will require

too many repairs, and too long time must elapse before she can go to sea. There are many new frigates building, and I understand to be launched. I flatter myself I shall command one of them.

I hope to be able to go down to Norfolk; to tell you all how happy I shall be once more to see my dear mother and *les petits,* would be needless. It will cost me many a bitter pang, the sight of the old house: but I must bear up against it. God bless you, my dear father. I shall make Portsmouth, and shall expect you.

TO THE SAME.

Lat. 46° N. Lon. 16° W.
Amphion, June 21st, 1807.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I have just brought-to an English cutter bound to England, and as she will be there much sooner than ourselves, I cannot defer writing you a line, to say how happy I am at the expectation of soon seeing you in England. My fears respecting Amphion are too true; she is so bad, that it was necessary she should proceed home immediately, and *me voilà* twenty-six degrees

from Cadiz with thirty-six sail of vessels under convoy. The wind is dead against us, and I reckon on three weeks more before I anchor at Spithead, where I shall ardently hope to see you, and as many of the Godwick party as can be spared from DUTY. I shall most probably be down in Norfolk on leave of absence whilst the ship is in dock. I do not think the Amphion will be paid off, at least I hope not. I must not be laid on the *shelf*, nor will I if I can avoid it, be assured.

I had a most gracious reception from Lord Collingwood. He has written for me to be sent out to him again when the ship is repaired.

The Amphion, on arriving at Portsmouth, in August, was immediately put into dock to be refitted as quickly as possible; it was the expressed wish of Lord Collingwood that she should again come under the same commander, as the steady and indefatigable zeal of her captain had neither passed unnoticed nor unappreciated by so able a commander. Feeling the highest confidence in his judgment from previous services, it was still more confirmed by his ready and suc-

cessful co-operation in the transactions on the coast of Calabria; and Lord Collingwood when entreating Lord Mulgrave, then at the head of the Board of Admiralty that he might be reinforced with more frigates, adds, "I should be glad that Captain Hoste, of the Amphion, should come, for he is active, vigilant, and knows the coast, and more depends upon the man than the ship."

Captain Hoste, as soon as leave of absence could be obtained, paid a short visit to his father's house. Painful was the first meeting, after the loss of that brother and sister who, nearest to his own age, had been the earliest and dearest companions of his youth. He had, however, on quitting home, the happiness of taking with him in the Amphion, as volunteer, his brother Edward, then a boy of thirteen years of age.

Many weeks previous to sailing he returned to Portsmouth, to hasten the re-fitting of the Amphion, when, in his own language, "she was now as good as new, and stronger than when launched," and sailed the beginning of January.

BOOK III.

FROM 1808 TO 1811.

——'Twas then his mighty soul was proved,
That in the shock of charging hosts unmoved,
Amidst confusion, horror, and despair,
Examined all the dreadful scenes of war:
In peaceful thought the field of death surveyed,
To fainting squadrons sent the timely aid,
Inspired repulsed battalions to engage,
And taught the doubtful battle where to rage.
So when an angel, by divine command,
With rising tempests shakes a guilty land,
Such as of late o'er pale Britannia past,
Calm and serene he drives the furious blast:
And, pleased th' Almighty's orders to perform,
Rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm.

ADDISON.

BOOK III.

FROM 1808 TO 1811.

SAILS FROM ENGLAND.—JOINS LORD COLLINGWOOD.—GALLANT ACTION WITH A FRENCH FRIGATE.—CRUISES IN THE ADRIATIC. ACTIVE SERVICES IN THE ADRIATIC.—BATTERIES AND GUN BOATS ON THE COAST OF FRIULI AND ISTREA CAPTURED AND DESTROYED.—TAKES SEVERAL CONVOYS.—BATTLE OF LISSA.—RECEIVES A MEDAL FOR THAT GLORIOUS ACTION, AND ARRIVES IN ENGLAND.

Amphion, off Cowes, Isle of Wight,
Jan. 18th, 1808.

MY DEAR FATHER,

Once more afloat and under sail, with hardly a wish unsatisfied, behold me the happiest fellow alive. I left Spithead this morning, and am now running for Yarmouth Roads, where I shall remain all night, and start afresh to-morrow morning, if the wind continues fair.

We have a large convoy of near sixty sail, and two sloops of war and Amphion. Our dear little sailor is very well, and in high feather at

the idea of leaving Portsmouth. Six months' spell in that delectable spot is quite enough, I assure you. It is the most beautiful day I ever saw; and the Isle of Wight on one side, and the coast about Lymington and Southampton on the other, form altogether the most beautiful prospect I ever beheld. Dear little Edward was in raptures.

19th.—Still at anchor in Yarmouth Roads, and no prospect of a fair wind. All well and hearty. Give my kindest love to my dear mother, and all hands, and believe me to be

Your affectionate son, W. HOSTE.

TO MRS. HOSTE.

Amphion, Plymouth, Jan. 30th, 1808.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

Once more anchored, I verily believe some old witch has got possession of the wind, and is determined to blow westerly till there is not a breath in the *bag*.

We sailed from Falmouth on the 26th with the convoy and a fine north-east wind, and had just got clear of the Channel, when a most violent gale came on from the west, which after

buffeting against for two days, I found in vain to contend with, and was very glad to reach Plymouth Sound with my convoy all safe. I think we are fortunate in not having sailed, as the Rochfort squadron might have fallen in with us, and made a good thing of it. Sir Richard Strachan will, I doubt not, make an example of them; if he overtakes them, and as he was close in pursuit, I think there is every chance of a good account. Conjecture is afloat where they are bound; perhaps to Brazil, Madeira, or merely to stop the East India convoy, which was to have sailed some time ago, but it was detained by westerly winds, as well as ours.

I shall give you a line when I quit this anchorage, and hope that will not be long, for I am anxious to get clear of this convoy work, and to be better and more actively employed. I think an American war inevitable: if we do not quickly decide one way or other, the Yankeys will have got all their ships safe in their harbours. The embargo is a bold measure on their part.

What does my father think of the speech from the Throne? It breathes nothing but war, war,

war; and war I verily believe it will be till I am an old grey-headed *gent*.

The Amphion having joined the fleet off Lisbon February 22nd, proceeded to Malta on a cruise to the eastward.

On the evening of the 25th of March, a heavy gale came on, with rain, thunder, and lightning, which struck and injured the main-top-mast and top-gallant-mast. While Captain Hoste was anxiously observing the effect of the gale, and directing in the best manner for the security of the ship, the top-gallant-mast was observed to be on fire. With that coolness and promptness that attended him in every necessity, he instantly went aloft himself, and with the jacket he had stripped off for the purpose, and which was already completely drenched with rain, he succeeded in quickly extinguishing the flames.

The Amphion was not severely injured in other respects, and she fortunately was enabled to anchor the following morning in Valetta harbour, and sailed to join the admiral off Sicily on the 2nd of April, where he was ordered to reconnoitre the enemy's force in Mahon and Toulon, and make his report accordingly.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Amphion, off Sicily, April 26th, 1808.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I am now quitting the squadron on a cruise off Toulon, where the French fleet have arrived safe, after landing sixteen thousand men at Corfu, and re-entered it with a twelvemonth's provisions. Want of information seems to be the only cause why Lord Collingwood did not come up with them. There are literally nothing but English and French ships on the face of the waters, and very few of the latter; consequently the chance of procuring information from neutrals of the destination and course of an enemy's squadron is much less than formerly. I reconnoitred them on the 23rd instant: all snug in Toulon; and having given that information to the admiral, am now returning to watch their further movements. I do not imagine their stay will be long.

Something besides the relief of Corfu was the object of that expedition from Rochfort and Toulon; perhaps the subversion of the Ottoman empire in Europe. The overthrow of kingdoms

and empires now-a-days, are trifles in the Corsican's eye. His resolution once taken, few obstacles (when a British fleet is out of the way) can oppose him.

I have not seen George, nor am I likely. He is still quartered at Augusta, and is, from all I can understand, as much beloved by every one as ever. Sir J. Stuart is ordered to take the command of the army: an ample scope for the hero of Maida to display his military talents. Armies are collecting in the south of Italy, avowedly for the purpose of reducing Sicily.

TO THE SAME.

Amphion, off Majorca, May 19th, 1808.

MY DEAR FATHER,

For fear the papers should give you a long rigmarole story about Amphion and her crew, I am determined to give you a scrawl directly, though no chance of sending it offers at present. I am on the point of joining Admiral Thornborough off Minorca, and shall leave this with him.

I shall begin with saying our dear Edward is quite well, and has commenced his career already

in the fighting way, and I can assure you will not tarnish the illustrious honours of your *house*. We have had a small breeze with a French frigate, and had the rascal allowed me to close in with him, the day would have been a glorious one for Amphion. I think, however, it will appear *all* was done that was possible, and though not completely successful, speaks for itself.

On the 12th inst. coming into the Bay of Rosas, the frontier town of Spain in the Mediterranean, I discovered an enemy's frigate at anchor under the batteries. Not a moment was lost; we had every man ready for boarding her, and my intention was to have run Amphion direct alongside, and have boarded from thence. There is no saying what would have been the *result*, but if cool and determined courage could have gained the day, the frigate would have been ours.

In all the actions I have ever been in, I never saw more cheerfulness and confidence than was expressed by all my gallant crew. When I tell you we were exposed to the fire of three heavy batteries besides the French ship, you will conceive we had enough on our hands. Notwith-

standing their fire, in three minutes I should have been on board of him; but the poltroon, seeing our intention, gave way to his fears, and rather than wait an attack where he had every advantage, cut his cables and ran her on shore, under the batteries of Fort Bouton, and another of eight twenty-four pounders. He was not to be off quite; and though I saw but little chance of getting him off, I still thought I might be enabled to destroy.

I anchored immediately as close as the safety of my own ship would admit, and continued engaging him for near three hours. His fire was completely *silenced*, and not a man to be seen on his decks; still, however, so close under the batteries, that I had no prospect of harming him by cannonade. I sent old Bennett, the first-lieutenant, to endeavour to set fire to him, but their vollies of musketry on his approach obliged him to retreat; which he did in a gallant style. Finding I could do no more with him, and that it was only throwing away powder and shot to no purpose, and galled by the fire of the batteries, which kept playing on us without interruption,

and the wind failing me, I made sail out of the road.

How we escaped I cannot tell; but the hand of Providence was over us; for (though under such a heavy fire for near four hours) on mustering our ship's company, and expecting to find our loss considerable, to my great happiness and astonishment, a few men slightly wounded was the only loss we had sustained; our sails and rigging much deranged, and several shot between wind and water.

Such is the issue of that day's work, and I think it will make you happy to hear your boys have done their duty. My little Ned behaved like a hero, and will be everything you could wish him. He tells me he could beat a dozen French frigates now. You may suppose our men are in high spirits at having engaged and driven on shore, under such disadvantages, a frigate so superior to themselves. It is gratifying to me, believe me, and if there is such a thing as true happiness in this life, I think for five minutes I have felt it.

I left the frigate on shore, where I think he

will remain some time. I join Admiral Thornborough, and then repair to Lord Collingwood. You will see my letter in the papers, I suppose. It is a plain statement of facts without any *humbug*, and I hope you will think so.

TO THE SAME.

Amphion, off Toulon, May 29th, 1808.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I have just this moment left Lord Collingwood, and I am delighted at the reception he has been pleased to give me. The affair of the 12th, which I enclose you, he thinks worthy of Amphion. All my friends congratulate me on it. Oh! had I been able to have brought him out, what a chance it would have been for your boys. I have felt, God knows, a great deal of pleasure at doing a good action, and I think my feelings very nearly alike when I beat the Frenchman.

I do not know where I am going, but it will be something good, if anything good is to be had.

TO MRS. HOSTE.

Amphion, off Toulon, May 29th, 1808.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

I am just returned from the flag. In my father's letter I mentioned our action with the French frigate, therefore no more on that head, only that I am the happiest fellow alive, that little Amphion has pleased the Commander-in-chief so much. He told me this evening—"I am confident, sir, everything that an officer or seaman could do, was done; and a most gallant effort you have made indeed!"

You may suppose, my dear mother, this language to a man who has nothing but his sword to depend on, was highly flattering. I stood at least *three feet higher* on the occasion; but I think you will be glad to hear all the good things that happen to both of us sailors, and therefore excuse all my vanity in telling it. I am ordered to Malta to stop shot-holes, &c. and then on a secret expedition, wherein I am to command. Where it is, or what it is, I am quite at a loss to determine; but that it is something good I am certain. I am in high favour with

Lord Collingwood, and can get all I ask. He is very good indeed; and if the present, or rather the intended cruise, is not lucrative, I am sure it will abound in honour; and between us, dear mother, I am as much an advocate for the latter, and more, than the former.

Our dear little Edward is all you yourself could desire. He will make an excellent officer, and sailor, and is partial to the profession he has chosen. I keep him pretty tight at it, I assure you, and some say, his being my brother is the hardest duty of any youngster in the ship. I try to make him an example to all the other boys, and he has pride enough to see and to act up to my warmest wishes. He is first at everything: I need say no more. When you write to him, give him a hint how necessary it is he should be acquainted with history in general. He is so fond of the practical business, that I am obliged to exert fraternal authority to get the theory.

Remember me, my dearest mother, to all hands most affectionately.

The affairs of Spain at this period were in a most critical situation. When Napoleon had perfidiously seized on their king, and Ferdinand his son, the people determined (in case the remaining members of the royal family should fall into that Emperor's power) to invest the Archduke Charles with supreme authority. For this purpose it was necessary to procure a safe and speedy conveyance under a judicious and trustworthy captain. Hoste was selected; and this is the secret expedition alluded to in the last letter. Nothing could better prove the perfect confidence which Lord Collingwood placed in his judgment and discretion; and although the event was not successful, the fault was owing to the circumstances, over which he had no control, and "his part of the play was performed," as he cheerfully wrote to his father, with the full approbation of his seniors.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Amphion, July 28, 1808, Malta.

MY DEAR FATHER,

At length I am arrived once more at Malta, and the mission I was sent on (though

still a mystery to all but a few) is finished. That it has not been attended with success, is not my fault. All my part of the play was performed, and, I am happy to add, with the approbation of my seniors. I believe it is generally understood to be a good thing rather than otherwise, by those who are acquainted with the circumstance. I cannot be more explicit now. It was totally a diplomatic business, and did not relate to professional service. I hope to get a peep at George at Augusta, as I go up the Adriatic, where I am ordered to join the Unité, Captain Campbell. It is the best cruising-ground I could have, and I shall make plenty of prize-money.

TO MRS. HOSTE.

Amphion, Malta, August 1st, 1808.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

Edward is writing to Godwick, and is giving a long account of our late cruise. I suppose he has told you of all our prizes that Amphion has taken in the Adriatic. Lord Collingwood has been good enough to give me the best cruise in his command. I am ordered to return

to the Adriatic, and place myself under the orders of Captain Campbell. It is the best cruising-ground he can give me, and I am much indebted to him for it. I wish we may be as fortunate as we have been in this last cruise.

When I can give you an order for my banker I shall be happy, I can assure you. I will give you a long letter on my taking the next prize.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Amphion, off Trieste, Oct. 16th, 1808.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I have at last got on good ground for *pewterising;* and I trust, if the war lasts, and I remain on this station for a couple of years, to be able to give my good father a lift over the stones. I have taken one ship, which is condemned at Malta; and an Imperial merchant, who came on board yesterday from Trieste, told me she was worth £20,000 sterling, and as he, poor fellow, was part owner, and spoke feelingly on the subject, it is very likely the case.

Our good friends at Somerset House, with their *cursed Board of Revision,* have, among other ridiculous innovations, curtailed the captain's

prize money considerably. A parcel of old *fograms,* who are very quietly seated over their Christmas fire, do not allow for many a sleepless night of watching and anxiety that we have. They forget that in our service, when others take it by turns to watch, the captain must always be on the alert, and that if the chances are in his favour in the prize way, it is more than overbalanced by constant anxiety and care.

We have been in daily expectation that the Emperor of Austria will be at length tired out with the repeated insults of despotic France, but it seems the cup of bitterness is not yet drained to the dregs. Austria is not yet arrived at the lowest depths of humiliation, though every means have been employed to insult and degrade her; every right trampled on; even that of her own trade with other countries; and so open and flagrant are the taunts and insults of French tyranny, that even under their own guns, I have witnessed the Imperial flag fired on by a pitiful piratical privateer of the allies of the great nation; and to make the pill still more bitter, the privateer was a Venetian, who before belonged to the Emperor, until the fatal battle of

Austerlitz, and was, perhaps, a very faithful subject.

The business of Spain has given them better hopes, and a few weeks ago, when the Diet of Hungary had assembled for the coronation of the Empress, it was supposed, from the loyal and patriotic speeches of many of the nation, that Austria would certainly take up arms against their implacable foe; it broke up, however, with the Hungarians offering two hundred thousand men for the defence of their country, and there the matter rests.

We hear now that Russia alone is wanting to commence hostilities, but that Alexander is so completely under Buonaparte's iron hand, that war with France will be followed with hostilities against Russia, unless detached by English gold from Buonaparte's leading strings.

I am now lying at anchor in sight of four Russian line-of-battle ships and two frigates, who are completely in readiness for sea. What would the good people of England say, were an enemy's frigate allowed to insult us in this manner? I hope ere that happens, I shall be as Pat says, " with my posterity."

Lord Collingwood is, I understand, off Toulon again. I have not heard from him, but his secretary wrote me from off Cadiz, to say it was probable they would shortly move.

I hope both you and James have had good shooting. I envy you not a little, though work now and play afterwards is the order of the day; by the by, that has been the case all my time. I shall be an *old* man when I live on shore, I expect, for there seems no end to the war.

Adieu my dear father; remember me to all hands, and believe me ever your most affectionate son, W. HOSTE.

TO MRS. HOSTE.

Amphion, off Trieste, Oct. 24th, 1808.

MY DEAR DEAR MOTHER,

How truly happy my dear boy Edward and myself were to find by all your affectionate letters that all were well at dear old Godwick. I cannot tell you, thou best of mothers, how dear, how very dear you are to us; be assured the affection you have ever shown is returned, if possible, a thousand fold; and though many a long long league separates us, we dwell on the recollection

of happy scenes, and the many friends far from us in Old England, and with the hope that we shall ere long be once more altogether, and as happy as we ever have been when in the old house.

I do not know or care what the *gents* at the Admiralty may think of the business of the 12th of May. I have had the most flattering testimony of my Commander-in-chief's approbation of my conduct on that day, as well as from every officer on the station. I believe it is not right to insert the letter unless success attends the affair. That it failed, was no fault of mine or my brave crew; the dastardly conduct of our enemy alone prevented the trial in its full force.

Never mind, dear mother, though it is not inserted in the Gazette; it shall go hard but some other day that self-same Gazette will do me justice. The only good that I know of from that day's work is, my appointment to the Adriatic station, which was the best gift in the power of the Commander-in-chief.

We are in daily expectation of being admitted into Trieste; it is now twelve weeks since I have had a foot on shore. Dear little Ned goes on

very well indeed; he improves in his navigation much beyond his years. I expect in another month to be at Malta, to refit and water.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Amphion, off Ancona, October 30th, 1808.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I left Trieste on Monday last for a few days' cruise off this coast, and saw my friends lying in Ancona, to whom I sent a friendly invitation, in the name of Amphion and crew, requesting they would come out and try their strength, for the honour of their flag; but I might have spared myself the trouble, for all my efforts to rouse one spark of national honour failed, and there they remain (a frigate and brig).

The report that the Emperor of Austria has at length determined on hostility with France gains ground, and we are in momentary expectation of war being announced. It will not be of any use to us (I mean our squadron) in these seas; but we are not so selfish but that we fully see the consequences which must result at this crisis, particularly from a rupture with France;

indeed, unless the Emperor of Austria declares himself in our favour, I am afraid, notwithstanding the present successes of the patriots in Spain, that Napoleon's two hundred thousand men will prove too powerful. I do not mean by that, that they can remain against the inclination and strength of a whole nation determined to be free; but I am afraid, when this powerful force gets established in the country, that many who now are obliged to fight against them will turn traitors, and join the French party. I have a great opinion of the Spaniards from what they have lately done, but have they the means to carry on a war with such a power as France at this moment is, not as it was? They have not a Charles the Fifth to lead them, nor are they united among themselves, but torn by intestine commotion and that spirit of party, which, though united against France perhaps, still must hurt the general interest of any country when struggling for independence, nay even for existence. I believe the French have possession of the passes into Spain; if so, they have the means of reinforcing their army whenever they please, which if not opposed in some other direc-

tion, will harass and tire out the Dons, notwithstanding our assistance. Whether I am right in my conjectures is proved before this, I dare say.

The French will gain Madrid, I would almost stake my life; but I think, if the Spaniards are firm after their first losses, and rally with the same determination that they set out with, of being a free people, that in six months afterwards, the war would be finished, and a general peace the consequence of Spanish patriotism. *Beuone* is no chicken in the field; he has the best generals in Europe. Who is there to oppose him? or rather, whom have we to oppose him? The Archduke Charles alone is at all to be compared to him, and he has been almost ever unfortunate; which, though no crime, goes a great way with soldiers. Be assured the "Corsican and Russian both together, are confident against the world in arms." (I mean on shore.) No salt-water work for them. Oh for my friend *Beuone* afloat!

November 15th, 1808. Off Trieste.—I have just time to close this packet before a vessel sails, unexpectedly, for Malta. I have returned to Trieste with three good prizes. Yours, &c.

Captain Hoste returned to Malta to refit on the 17th of December. During this cruise, by his wonted activity and that of his crew, the boats of the Amphion had taken at different times thirty-eight vessels and burned six. On the 8th of November, having sent the yawl manned and armed in shore, while rowing close in, they discovered a small boat, which they hailed. There were discovered three British subjects, who had, after many and severe perils, escaped from the French prison at Verdun. They were immediately received and welcomed on board the Amphion's boat, and assisted in an attack made on two armed vessels, of which the yawl was shortly after in pursuit; but the force proving too superior, they were compelled to make their retreat after a severe struggle, in which two seamen were killed, the officer commanding (Lieutenant Jones) and three seamen wounded, as also Mr. O'Brien, one of the prisoners received from the boat, who was late of his Majesty's ship Hussar, wrecked off the coast of Ushant, February 8th, 1804.

The barge had been sent in chase in the same direction, and meeting the yawl in her crippled

state, took her in tow, and returned to the ship. Observing their approach with anxiety from the deck, Captain Hoste inquired eagerly, on their coming alongside, who were the Frenchmen thus placed in the boat, and on hearing that they were British officers thus delivered from captivity, his gratification at hearing of their escape was equalled only by the kindness he displayed during their stay on board.

Subsequently Mr. O'Brien served as lieutenant on board the Amphion, from March 1810 until she was paid off; and continued under the command of Captain Hoste till, for his gallant and distinguished conduct, he was promoted to the rank of commander, in April 1809.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Amphion, Malta, Jan. 5th, 1809.

MY DEAR FATHER,

To-morrow I sail from hence for the Adriatic again. The African frigate arrived here last night, with the Duke of Orleans on board. She brings us the first information of the disastrous events in Spain, but as the news they brought from England was not confirmed at

Gibraltar, we are in hopes it is not quite correct, though little doubt remains that the Spaniards have been completely beaten.

I hope our army, with its gallant leader, will stop their progress; but it is fearful odds: and though I believe most firmly that never a soul in that army knows what fear is, yet what will not superiority of numbers effect, aided by the skill and generalship of Napoleon and his numerous excellent officers!

I confess, for my own part, that I never was sanguine in the Spanish business, though I am still of opinion, if the whole nation are firm in their determination not to submit to the yoke of France, but to be what they ought, a free people, that the French army will be obliged to quit Spain ultimately. It remains to be proved whether they are a great people or not; whether that spirit of independence and opposition to forcing power and French influence, that determination to be a free people, will remain with them after the disasters and defeats which they have lately met with.

TO THE SAME.

Amphion, off Lissa, Feb. 4th, 1809.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I left Malta on the 14th inst. and have been on my cruising ground only a fortnight, which has produced a French brig, laden with corn, and a cutter with hemp, both from Ancona to Corfu. I shall now be left to myself, and think to make a pretty good thing of it.

At last we have brought matters to bear with Austria. I believe she will once more try the chance of war; it is the only remedy against complete vassalage. It appears that their armies were to march on the 1st of February. The Archdukes John and Ferdinand are to have the chief command with General Bellegarde, but what particular command I am unacquainted with. This will, I trust, assist the brave Spaniards, who, from their gallantry and perseverance, deserve a better fate than awaits them from the Corsican yoke. I shall myself, I hope, be at Trieste in a fortnight, and from thence I trust to give you a very good account.

Pray Heaven the Austrian arms may be suc-

cessful this time! but I have my doubts. Treachery, treachery, has formerly ruined them, and still we see the chief cause of their ruin, General Mack, now discovering his courage through Vienna.

Lord Collingwood is at Malta, forced in from distress of weather. We have had a most severe winter, and it is colder than in England up the Adriatic. Should the Austrians prove successful, we shall have pretty pickings in this part of the world.

The Unité, Captain Campbell, sailed for Malta, and on the 8th of February the Amphion was joined off Long Island by the Redwing, eighteen-gun brig, bringing information of two enemy's vessels lying in the Island of Melida: to attack which the British ships immediately proceeded, and found there an armed brig, mounting six twelve-pounders carronades, and a trabacculo advantageously moored for defending the entrance of the creek, and four hundred soldiers, which had been landed from them, were drawn up behind some houses and walls.

The Brigand, a twelve-pounder from the shore,

opened their fire on the British ships as they were taking their stations, which was no sooner effected, than the troops and crew fled in all directions; thus allowing Lieutenant Phillott, of the Amphion, with the boats' crews of both ships, to land and bring off without resistance three guns, one twelve-pounder and two small ones, and to destroy two storehouses of wine and oil collected there. No one suffered in this attack, but the brig sunk soon after being got into deep water, in consequence of the shot from the English ships.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Amphion, off Corfu, February 21st, 1809.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I left Trieste three days ago, and then all was for immediate hostility. I have not been very successful since my last. We shall have some amusement this spring, no doubt. Napoleon is at Milan, organizing an army to meet the approaching storm from Austria. Our accounts from Spain are very sombre, I hope unfounded. It is most probable there will be a campaign in Italy.

Every thing looks for success here, but *nous verrons.* Lord Collingwood is still at Malta, refitting; I have had several very good letters from his secretary, and all in that quarter is as I could wish.

I hope my dear mother and all hands are quite well. Tell my uncle I have written him several long letters, and have received no answer since I left England. I do not think, nevertheless, that he has forgotten us or Amphion.

We have a report here that it is peace with Russia and England, and Turkey also; *tant mieux,* and the worse for Buony. This next year will either bring us peace with France or war for ever, I think. Adieu, my dear father.

TO THE SAME.

Amphion, off Trieste, March 23rd, 1809.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I returned this day from an unsuccessful cruise after two French brigs that I had information were cruising off Zara, but it is all a humbug, and they are quite safe at anchor in their own ports. The French have just manned and equipped a fine thirty-six gun frigate

at Venice, and sent her to Ancona, to join the one that was lying there; at present, they have a squadron of two frigates and two brigs there, and expect another frigate shortly, from Venice. So great an apparent superiority may induce them, perhaps, to try the chance of war, but I much fear their want of spirit, to risk even so unequal a combat. I have one brig with me, and am *pro tempore* (I believe only) senior officer in the Adriatic; Campbell having been ordered to join the Commander-in-chief.

I do not hesitate to tell you, my dear father, (because I am sure that you and all at Godwick will be glad to hear of our welfare) that your son's prospects at this moment are highly flattering. I know I have the confidence and esteem of my admiral; he has placed me in a situation where I hope there will be opportunities to convince him that that confidence has not been misplaced. To co-operate with the Austrian forces in their present contest, by an active share in all their expeditions, where a naval force is required, is the part assigned me for the present. May I prove not unworthy the task I am charged with! and let a father's prayers be added to those of

his son, that the same Almighty power that for many years has protected him through dangers and difficulties, may still continue his support (without which all other is unavailing), and make him the humble instrument, in some measure, of chastening that wretch's arrogance (the disturber of all Europe), and of adding to the honour and glory of his own country!

The port of Trieste will be shortly open to the British flag; at present we communicate by truce. All bids fair for a successful issue to the Austrian arms; their army is in high order, and eager for action. Prince John, I understand, is to command in this part. In a few weeks, perhaps sooner, hostilities will commence, and then there is to the Emperor of Austria no alternative but victory or the certainty of being dethroned.

We have reports here of the death of Sir John Moore, and the disembarkation of the army at Corunna. I fear it is too true; it appears, however, that our retreat was a *chef-d'œuvre*, and the French allow that, in a march of four hundred miles, they were not able to cut off a single man or a piece of cannon. If our army

land in the southern provinces, nearer Cadiz, and join the Spanish army there, it will be a long time ere Soult can, at this season of the year, from the heart of Gallicia, bring his already fatigued and dispirited army through the wasted provinces of Leon and Old Castile, into Andalusia. All depends on this campaign, and either Europe will be subjected by the most odious tyranny of a Corsican usurper to the lowest depth of bondage, or we shall have some balance of power once more established, and to crown all, a general, and most probably a lasting peace.

These are my ideas. I am no croaker; and at present I think all looks well. You will say I am turned a would-be politician, and laugh heartily at me for my profound reasoning. It is not often, I assure you, I think of politics, particularly of party. Lord Nelson used to say, "Sailors had no business with party; that who was in, or who was out, ought to be the same thing to them." Perhaps I do not quite agree to all that, but I assure you, my chief reason for wishing the outs in, is, the chance of its being attended with no small advantage to yourself.

Yours, &c.

While co-operating with the Austrians, the Amphion remained almost constantly between the coast of Capo d'Istrias and Ancona, continually reconnoitring the port of the latter place, where the enemy were collecting a squadron for the purpose of defending their coast, as well as protecting their trade in the Adriatic, but they only partially succeeded in either point. Captain Hoste had taken, since his arrival, twenty-eight vessels of different descriptions, and one gun-boat, of the second class, one officer and seventeen men. The two signal-posts placed near Gora Veschio, for the purpose of communication with the interior, were destroyed on the 6th of April. The enemy's force having considerably increased in the Adriatic, Captain Brenton, in the Spartan, was sent as senior officer in addition to the British squadron; and on the 23rd of April an attack was made by the boats of the Spartan, Amphion, and Mercury, on the town of Pesaro, in which they succeeded in bringing off thirteen sail of merchant vessels, having destroyed others, and blown up the castle at the entrance of the river.

The public character of the captain of the

Spartan, as well as his private worth, ensured to him the regard and esteem of all, but most especially was he loved and valued by one who, like Captain Hoste, could justly appreciate the union of an enterprising spirit with a refined and cultivated mind.

In the following letter will be seen how sincere a regard was felt for him, and how congenial was his character with that of Captain Hoste.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Amphion, off Trieste, April 29th, 1809.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I have a moment's time before the vessel sails to give you a line, and thank you for your affectionate letter in January. Since my last, we have been reinforced from Malta by the Spartan, Captain Brenton, who is senior to me, but who is ordered up here on account of the increase of the enemy's force at Ancona. Of course, as he was at Malta at the time the information arrived of the enemy's squadron being so considerably increased, the first ships that were ready were ordered out to join me, and the Spartan was the one. I do not regret it, because

of all others Captain Brenton is the man I should wish to serve with: be assured, he is a dashing character, and I look forward to a most brilliant summer campaign.

We have already begun well, and succeeded in the capture of thirteen sail of convoy, deeply and richly laden. You know, or rather I must inform you, how long we are after a prize is taken before the money is paid us.

Rest assured, my dear father, that I will not lose sight of what you mention in your last letter, and I hope soon to be able to convince you that deeds as well as words are part of my creed. I will write to my mother the next opportunity; and in great haste, believe me, with love to all.

The successes of the Austrians are as yet rapid and uninterrupted, and all goes on well. Headquarters at Montebello in the Tyrol.

TO THE SAME.

Amphion, off Lucie, June 4th, 1809.

MY DEAR FATHER,

Before this reaches you, you will have heard of the sad reverse the Austrian affairs have taken, and that the French arms are still (for the misery and wretchedness of thousands) victorious. Trieste, Istrea, Carinthia, Friuli, and the whole of Dalmatia, have been gained by one battle, (the 21st of April,) and the Archduke has retired towards Hungary, leaving the capital a prey to French plunderers, commissaries, and their hordes of villains. Vienna surrendered on the 14th instant.

Since my last, we have received a reinforcement of three ships of the line, so now all hopes of an action with our friends the Ancona squadron have vanished. Captain Hargood is our commodore. I know very little of him, but he appears good-tempered and civil. By the by, a courier arrived last night from Agurni, in Croatia, giving an account of a brilliant victory gained by Prince Charles over Napoleon in person near Vienna.

I send you the correct translation, which, if you think proper, forward to Mr. Coke with my compliments. I sent him some time ago a translation of the manifesto of Prince Charles. My motive in sending him these papers, has nothing more in it than to show him that I have not, nor ever shall, forget the obligations I owe him; and the present mode is the only way I have of proving it.

And now, my best of fathers, hear me on a subject which concerns us both very intimately, and to me is a very delicate one. I will candidly lay before you my situation in respect to money matters, and you shall act and decide yourself afterwards. You have heard most probably, that at least I have realised a fortune, and that I have gained lots of pewter. Every one tells me the same; I am very sorry to say it exists only in idea.

Since my sailing from England in 1808, I have received prize money to the amount of £2600, half of which goes to Captain Briggs, who has shared with me all the war. This I remitted to my agent, desiring him to give half of it to Captain Briggs' agent, and to purchase into the

Stocks with the remainder. I give you my honour this is all I received. I expect another £1000, perhaps more or less.

Your letter, my dear father, has added a double pleasure to what I formerly felt on making the little sum I mentioned above. I hope it will relieve your present wants, and I shall send to Clementson by this conveyance, to sell out on advance £500 in hard money, directly you think proper to draw on him. I am much afraid my other expenses have wasted the remainder, but when Mr. Clementson sends me the accounts, I shall be able to judge.

The capture of Trieste has lost us (that is the three frigates) at least £10,000. We took in there, a week before its fall, and when every thing was going on well, nineteen prizes loaded with oil, which were of great value, and which were taken with the place. This, and the late Austrian defeats, have cast a shade over our dashing little squadron.

Since the ships of the line have joined us, we have made an attack on the town of Pesaro, on the coast of Romagna. The marines of the squadron were landed under the command of

Captain Brenton and myself, and we had some smart work for an hour or two. We had remaining when the action ceased, only four barrels of powder. The loss fell heavily on little Amphion: two mids and four men dangerously wounded, but I hope they will recover. My dear boy, Edward, was on shore with me, and shared in the danger and honour of the day. Be assured, my dear father, he is all you could wish him to be, and the longer he is with me the more sensible I am of his worth.

We are going to lose our late Commodore Brenton. He is one of those few characters I have met with whom I should wish to make a friend of. He is really a good officer, and what is better, a good man. I need not say more of him than that he reminds me a thousand times a-day of my much-lamented brother. He stands high as a professional character, and I think would be an excellent school for Edward, whom he has offered to take under him; but I cannot part with him. Tell me your opinion.

I shall give my mother a long scrawl. This is pretty well, I think . . . . I have not heard from George this age.

Believe me, ever, my dear father, &c.

The whole of the Illyrian coast was now in possession of the French. To annoy their trade, destroy their works, and distress them in every possible manner, formed part of the duty of the squadron in the Adriatic.

July the 6th, the Amphion, cruising off that coast, observed a body of French troops in St. Andrea, on whom she fired; and on seeing the enemy transporting a heavy gun towards the point, she opened her starboard broadside at them. The enemy returned the fire, sent several forty-two pounders into her hull. The main-mast was shot through the starboard cheek, and part of the main piece; the fore-yard was shot through, and the starboard yard-arm cut off. Several shot went through the sails, and cut some of the running rigging. Being calm, the boats of the squadron were obliged to tow the ship out, when the enemy commenced firing from their gun, which was returned by a starboard broadside on them, and the launches and armed boats of the squadron were sent to attack them. The enemy's gun-boats shortly after made their retreat on shore, apparently damaged by the shot of the Amphion.

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Amphion, Trieste, July 27th, 1809.

MY DEAR FATHER,

We are on a blockade at last, and that of all places is Trieste, where I have passed not a few very happy hours. I am almost at a loss what to say about the news in this part of the world; reports are so various and so contradictory, that there is no believing a word. A diplomatic character, an ex-minister, who has been on board the Amphion for these last two months, received a letter from Mr. Bathurst (our good bishop's son), dated from Breda, July the 13th. He says, one continued series of fighting from the 4th to the 11th has taken place on the Danube, between the Archduke Charles and Napoleon; that the successes of the Austrian right wing have been counterbalanced by the defeat of the left under Prince Rosemberg; but that still the advantage is on the side of the Austrians, who have the resource of fresh troops, whilst his adversary is without a man in reserve.

I think there is great room for hope and exultation. Report says the Viceroy of Italy is

drowned in the Danube, and I believe it. We are blockading very strictly with three ships of the line and two frigates. I have been seven months out, and suppose I shall soon be at Malta, though I wish to see the end of the Austrian business. George is on the expedition to Sicily. They have taken the islands Ischia and Procida, without loss. Yours, &c.

Captain Hoste's activity continued unwearied. Scarcely a day passed but some service was performed against the enemy by the ship or the boats belonging to her. The signal-posts between Cortellazzo and Caorle, of Tagliamento and Ravenna, were destroyed by the seamen and marines at different times. On the 24th of August he reconnoitred the enemy's force at Cortellazzo, at the mouth of the Pavie, consisting of gun-boats and merchant-vessels, stationed there for the express purpose of protecting the trade between Venice and Trieste, moored in a strong position, under a battery of four twenty-four-pounders. From the shallowness of the water, he deemed it impracticable to get the ships in, but a fisherman, who gave a correct

account of the enemy's force and situation, confirmed his opinion, that could he carry the battery, which was a complete work, with a ditch and *chevaux-de-frise* round it, the boats might be cut out by those of his ship.

Sensible that it was an enterprise requiring as much caution as valour, Captain Hoste kept out of sight of land till the evening of the 26th, when, crowding all possible sail, he anchored off the mouth of the Pavie at one on the morning of the 27th, and in two hours after seventy of his gallant crew, marines and seamen, headed by Lieut. Phillott, were landed about a mile below the battery to the southward, and advanced to storm it, leaving the boats to push for the river the instant the fort was carried. At a quarter past three the alarm was given. The attack was instantly made with such vigour, that in ten minutes the fort was completely in possession of the English; and the concerted signal made, the guns were turned upon the gun-boats; the fire on which, and musketry from the marines, compelled them to instant surrender, when the boats took possession of the gun-boats and vessels. Having spiked the guns and totally

destroyed the battery and barrack, the whole detachment was re-embarked without the loss of a man, by 1 P. M.*

Setting aside all credit to himself in the design of this well-concerted affair, Captain Hoste, in his public letter, bestows all praise on the commanding officer:—"I have only to say, that he had the entire conducting of the attack; and on this, as on many other occasions, fully justified the confidence I placed in him."

TO THE REV. DIXON HOSTE.

Amphion, Lucine, August 31st, 1809.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I am this moment arrived here with six Venetian gun-boats, captured by the little Amphion in a most gallant manner by her boats,

* A LIST OF GUN-BOATS, &c. CAPTURED AND DESTROYED.—La Surveillante, mounting one long twenty-six-pounder in the bow, and one long twelve-pounder astern, with four swivels mounted on the gunwale, and thirty-six men.—La Vedette; one long twenty-six-pounder in the bow, and one long twelve-pounder astern, with four swivels mounted on the gunwale, and thirty-six men.—No. 80; one long twenty-four-pounder, with small arms.—No. 76; one long twenty-four-pounder, with small arms.—No. 77; one long twenty-four-pounder, with arms.—No. 64; one long twenty-four-pounder, with small arms.—Two trabacculos, laden with rice, cheese, &c. taken. Five trabacculos, laden with wood and charcoal, burnt in the river.

without the loss of a man. You will see the particulars in my public letter, which I should suppose at least will be published this time, as success was never more complete. Dear little Edward was in one of the boats, and shared in the glory and danger of the day. I am in hopes it will make the first lieutenant; he richly merits promotion, and if I had any interest, or any of my friends, I would make no scruple of asking their assistance.

I am to return to Trieste immediately, where I am in hopes we shall pick up something. The armistice still continues. It is said war will recommence, but I much doubt it. The Archduke Charles is superseded in his command as generalissimo. Had this taken place a few months ago, Austria might have been saved. Prince John of Litchtenstein commands in chief under the Emperor, with General Bellegarde. The army in numbers is more than equal to Napoleon's. Prince John is at Agram with seventy thousand men. It is said, if hostilities do begin again, he will march into Italy. I think it is the wisest measure they could adopt.

Our line of battle ships still remain in the Adriatic.

TO THE SAME.

Amphion, off Fiume, Sept. 24th, 1809.

MY DEAR FATHER,

I was in hopes to have anchored at Fiume before the Mercury, which sails this evening for Malta, had weighed, as I should then have been able to have given you all the news from this quarter. At present I am quite in the dark, not having spoken any vessel of consequence this fortnight.

This detested and, for Austria, fatal armistice, still continues, and will remain so till the end of the chapter, that is, till Buonaparte has dictated the peace to Austria; a pretty peace it will be. Do not *call out* against our Ministers; you should be here and witness the Austrian Government. How I bless my stars I am of that dear little island, and under a government like ours. When I see other countries and other people, I am not only proud of being an Englishman, but feel a sort of conscious superiority, which is in no other manner to be accounted for than its being common to all Englishmen, and is inherent in them; and these people know and confess their infe-

riority. I am well convinced there is not a man in my ship who does not fancy himself equal to at least ten Italians: but I am getting to bombast.

I hope all are well at the old house. I shall join the commander to-morrow. We are ordered in, from a violent fever that has made its appearance in the ship; it is now over, thank God. I had a slight touch of it myself, but am now quite, quite well; so do not be alarmed. I heard from George, dated the 16th of August, at Messina. All well, and, as usual, in high spirits.

Remember me to my dear mother, and believe me always, my dear father, &c.

TO MRS. HOSTE.

Amphion, Fiume, Sept. 29th, 1809.

MY DEAR MOTHER,

I am not certain how or when this letter will reach you, but most probably I shall be the bearer of it myself as far as Malta, where I believe it is intended Amphion should shortly be ordered; indeed it is almost time. We have been out ten months, and are in want of everything; besides, I am sorry to say our men, from

extreme heat, to damp and cold weather, are very sickly. I thank God we have lost none, and all now are quite convalescent. I have had a slight touch of fever myself, but am now quite hearty.

We were ordered here by the commodore, in consequence of our being sickly, and he recommended me, if possible, to live on shore for a few days, which advice I adopted, and am now living at Fiume, in the most hospitable family you can imagine. They are Flemings, and I assure you I never experienced so much attention and real goodness as they have shown me. They are of the noblesse, and distinguished for their loyalty and adherence to the reigning family. They speak not a word of English, so perforce I am obliged to chatter French; but that and a beautiful woman I by no means find annoying, and I am as happy and as comfortable as the contrast of no society and a very excellent one can make a man who has been ten months at sea, and living on salt-beef and dried salt-fish and potatoes almost all that time.

The same uncertainty as to peace or war still exists. I am of opinion hostilities will not re-

commence. The good people say they are to have an honourable peace; they must have strange ideas of honour when that can be an honourable peace which Napoleon dictates from the capital of their empire, and the finest provinces of Austria in his hands.

Adieu, my dear mother.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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